

IN THESE TIMES



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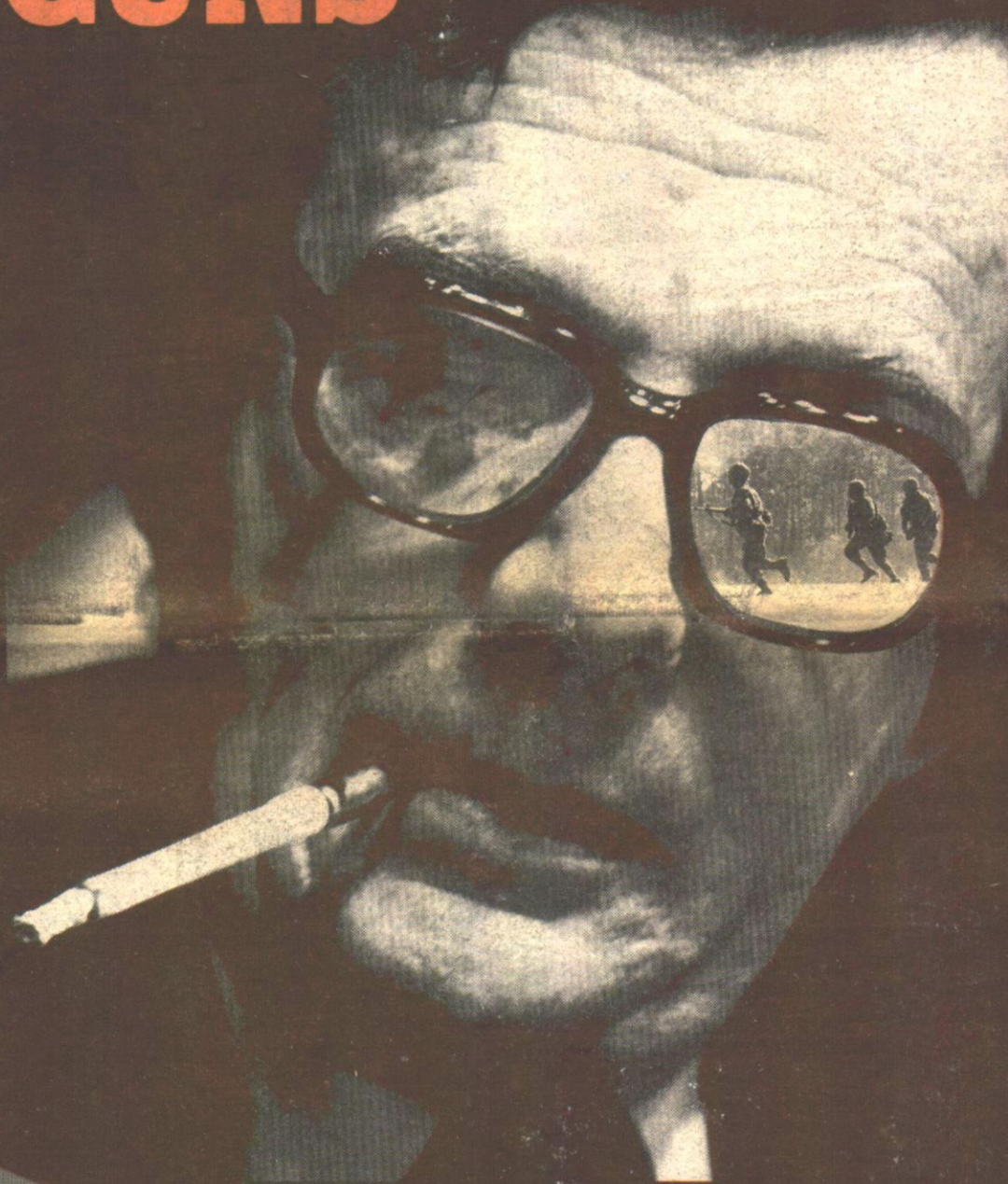
A Communist life

VOL. 6, NO. 17

MARCH 24-30, 1982

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Big LABOR sticks to its GUNS



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El Salvador
is causing
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AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland

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THE INSIDE STORY



Sen. Edward Kennedy said a nuclear weapons freeze would save the U.S. \$20 billion a year.

A long shot heard round the world

Joint Congressional Resolution for a Freeze and Reduction of Nuclear Weapons

1) As an immediate strategic arms control objective, the U.S. and the Soviet Union should: a) pursue a complete halt to the nuclear arms race; b) decide when and how to achieve a mutual and verifiable freeze on the testing, production, and further deployment of nuclear warheads, missiles and other delivery systems; and c) give special attention to destabilizing weapons whose deployment would make such a freeze more difficult to achieve.

2) Proceeding from this freeze, the U.S. and the Soviet Union should pursue major, mutual and verifiable reductions of nuclear warheads, missiles and other delivery systems, through annual percentages or equally effective means, in a manner than enhances stability.

By William Burr

WASHINGTON

A year ago, it seemed like a long shot. But that was before the European disarmament movement gained steam. Before Ronald Reagan reaffirmed the doctrine of a winnable nuclear war. Before the sabre-rattling grew louder in Washington. Before the defense budget almost doubled. Before E.P. Thompson's piece called "Protest and Survive" appeared in *The Nation*. Before Jonathan Schnell's "The Fate of the Earth" appeared in *The New Yorker*. Before legislatures in Connecticut, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Oregon, Wisconsin, Kansas and New York voted to support the national campaign for a "nuclear weapons freeze."

Maybe it's not a long shot anymore. Yet leaders of the snowballing nuclear weapons freeze movement were surprised at how quickly a few liberal members of Congress convinced 122 representatives and 19 senators to endorse on March 10 a congressional resolution calling for both a freeze on the arms race and negotiated reductions of nuclear weapons. Freeze organizers were caught offguard because they had assumed congressional action would not be possible—or necessary—until later this year, when grassroots support had swelled. Although the resolution was signed by disproportionately more Democrats than Republicans, it was a bi-partisan measure. And it was supported by religious, environmental and peace movement leaders—

ranging from Rev. Billy Graham to Coretta Scott King—who have played key roles in developing grassroots support for the freeze. More endorsements came from a small but strategically important constituency, an array of former national security officials and arms experts including ex-CIA director William Colby, ex-presidential advisor W. Averell Harriman and former NATO ambassador Harlan Cleveland.

In a speech before the Senate on March 10, Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.) called the arms race an "absolute threat to the earth." He argued that now was the moment of "historical opportunity"—before the U.S. and the Soviet Union had crossed the "Rubicon" of a dangerous first-strike counterforce capacity.

Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), stressing the social costs of a nuclear build-up, said a freeze would save the U.S. \$20 billion a year, while reductions in weapons stockpiles would save billions more. He claimed it was feasible that each country could cut current arms levels by 50 percent initially, and then, over a seven-year period, reduce them by an additional 7 percent annually.

Nuclear freeze organizers across the country see the congressional resolution as a significant first step, but point out that it is only an expression of intent and not binding. They hope that the next step will be congressional legislation against the nuclear weapons budget.

In an interview with *In These Times*, Randy Keeler, the St. Louis-based national coordinator of the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign coalition, said that the resolution was "a good start" and a useful "vehicle to rally support." But he emphasized that "neither the wording, nor timing, nor choice of sponsors was ours." According to Keeler, some organizers worried that the resolution went to Congress prematurely, before local movements had time to "build a fire" underneath moderate and conservative Republicans. He was concerned that political opponents would begin building their anti-freeze coffers. So to keep the momentum going, Keeler said the freeze coalition will push for grassroots endorsement of pro-freeze candidates in November's elections.

The campaign currently has groups in 43 states, but its support is weak in the Sunbelt and also lacks strong ties to organized labor. To bolster its strength, the campaign will step up organizing efforts in the South and the Southwest. And the freeze coalition will soon hire a full-time organizer to initiate a "dialogue" with trade unions.

Like freeze activists, congressional supporters believe broad support at the local level is the key to further progress. Although the resolution has bi-partisan sponsorship, less than 20 Republicans have signed it. According to Gordon Kerr, legislative assistant to Rep. Jonathan Bingham (D-N.Y.)—who was one of the first congressional supporters—there will be no push for more signatures at this time. The resolution's popularity will be tested in a few weeks when Rep. Clement Zablocki (D-Wis.), Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, holds arms control hearings.

Although he doesn't support the resolution, he does want to pressure the Reagan administration to do something about arms talks. Zablocki has said he will allow consideration of the freeze proposal at the hearing and apparently has agreed to let three freeze grassroots supporters state their case. According to Kerr, Bingham hopes that strong, popular support will make it possible for the Foreign Affairs Committee to agree upon a freeze resolution.

But the task of rounding up congressional Republican support is being complicated by the administration's hostile reactions to the resolution. Secretary of

State Alexander Haig argued on March 10 before a senate appropriations subcommittee that the freeze was "bad arms control policy" because it would codify a "six-to-one" Soviet advantage in intermediate range nuclear weapons in Europe. Recently, Reagan echoed Haig's remarks in speeches in the South.

Comparative strength.

The estimates of comparative military strength are likely to emerge as an important issue in the freeze debate. The administration's numbers reflect the disparity between the U.S. and Soviet estimates of what constitutes a balance of medium-range nuclear weapons in the European theater. The list that U.S. negotiator Paul Nitze has used at the Geneva talks claims that the Soviets have 3,800 weapons systems to the U.S.' 560. The Soviets tally the numbers at 975 and 986 respectively. The U.S. figure, however, includes many "less capable" Soviet fighter bombers, according to Stanley Sloan, a specialist in NATO politics with the Congressional Research Service. Sloan and other analysts also point out that the U.S. will not agree to the Soviet list, which includes British and French missiles as well as U.S. "forward-based" bomber systems.

Thus, by playing the nuclear numbers game, one can arrive at figures that indicate a much closer NATO-Warsaw Pact balance than either Haig or Reagan would admit. But Senators Hatfield and Kennedy stress that the administration's focus on the European balance is not to the point. The freeze resolution applies not only to intermediate range weapons based in Europe, but also to the global balance of strategic nuclear forces. In a March 14 response to the State Department's contentions, Hatfield and Kennedy pointed out that the U.S. long-range "triad" of bomber, land and sea-based missiles is armed with 9,000 bombs and warheads to the Soviet's 7,000. They then challenged Haig "to debate our freeze and reduction proposal fairly and honestly."

The administration, nevertheless, has its own arms control agenda. Policymakers such as Haig and Weinberger have indicated that talks cannot begin until new weapons systems now in production are deployed. Next month the National Security Council will present Reagan with a package of alternative arms control policies. According to Undersecretary of State Lawrence Eagleberger, the timing of strategic arms talks depends upon the "overall East-West climate." There are some indications that the State Department is aiming at an elaborate linkage strategy involving arms control talks and economic concessions if the Soviets pledge to curb Cuban "activity" in Central America. This strategy, of course, assumes that Cuba is orchestrating Central American revolt and that U.S. economic pressure will change Soviet policy. Neither assumption appears correct, and, in any case, the administration's strategy is still uncertain.

In the long run, freeze activists must be able to refute the Defense Department philosophy that implies the Soviet Union is just itching to assert military control over every nation on all continents and is building an invincible military machine to do it. And freeze activists must be able to convince Americans that the only way to ensure national safety is to drastically reduce nuclear weaponry. If they can do that, they will go a long way toward confirming this opinion of Dwight D. Eisenhower: "One of these days, the people will make the governments of the world stand aside to let them have peace."

Maybe it's really not a long shot anymore. ■
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IN THESE TIMES

The Independent Socialist Newspaper

Published 42 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June, July and August by The Institute for Policy Studies, Inc., 1509 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60622, (312) 489-4444. Institute for Policy Studies National Offices, 1901 Q Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20009.

(ISSN 0160-5992)



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This issue (Vol. 6, No. 17) published March 24, 1982, for newsstand sales March 24-30, 1982.

Will labor come in from the cold war?

By David Moberg

WASHINGTON

WITH GEORGE MEANY gone and Ronald Reagan providing a big push, the top ranks of the labor movement have bit by bit taken on a new look. Lane Kirkland, in sharp contrast to his predecessor, walked a picket line (with striking air controllers) and even called a mass protest (Solidarity Day). He has emerged as an articulate, hard-hitting leader of a coalition attack on Reagan budget and economic policies. And, however reluctantly, he has invited critical examination of just how much money the U.S. should be spending on arms.

On foreign policy, however, the labor movement is changing much more slowly from the Meany days. Despite some relaxation of old rigidities, a more collegial style on Kirkland's part and a return to greater international cooperation with other unions, the AFL-CIO leaders and staff are likely to resist serious challenges to the hard-line anti-communism that has long characterized labor foreign policy. Yet the weaknesses of the traditional approach, combined with growing discontent within the labor movement (such as that rising over U.S. actions in El Salvador), may eventually erode one of the granite pillars of U.S. labor policies.

Deep-seated beliefs in a simple world neatly divided between freedom and totalitarianism will not change easily. "I see absolutely no prospects of change, given the leadership," one leftist union staffer lamented. But Albert Herling, a socialist who once contended with the Meany approach to foreign affairs as editor at the Bakery and Confectionary Workers union, said, "Maybe I ask for little, but when you live through the other, it's a great change, a tremendous improvement."

Besides the El Salvador protests and the new look at military spending, the signs of hope that labor is coming in from the Cold War are a bit ethereal—a return to abandoned international organizations (the International Labor Organization, ILO and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, ICFTU), a slightly more open attitude toward foreign unions that disagree with the AFL-CIO, occasional statements that set some distance between Kirkland and his neoconservative foreign policy associates in groups like the anti-Soviet, pro-military Committee on the Present Danger (which Kirkland co-chairs) and encouraging nuances in recent declarations about events in Chile, South Africa and El Salvador. Yet the battle is just beginning to heat up: A deeper conflict in Central America, a growing European disarmament movement that finds a counterpart in the U.S. or other foreign policy crises could easily widen the cracks that are appearing in labor unity on international relations.

Foreign policy is usually the preserve of the president of the AFL-CIO or the union presidents, most of whom give it little thought and defer to the federation. It is very insulated from influence by the rank and file, who are only occasionally moved to act on international issues. "Nobody in the labor movement really gives a damn except a few zealots on both sides," one liberal staff person commented.

The "free" union banner.

The AFL-CIO typically presents its foreign policy as centered on the promotion of free trade unions against left- or right-wing "totalitarians." Unionism is a universal aspiration regardless of who owns the means of production, Kirkland told a recent graduating class of union trainees at the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), the AFL-CIO affiliated agency that promotes U.S.-style unionism in Latin America and has had close ties with the CIA. "We have no

wish to impose a single trade union model on the workers of other lands. We insist only that the workers of any country have the right to choose and run the affairs of their own unions without interference from the state or the employer. The refusal to grant that right—as in Poland today—tells us all we need to know about the character of a government and its attitude toward human rights."

Despite the limitations of such a credo—democracy means much more than union rights and is related to control over the means of production—it is a worthy ideal. Unfortunately, in applying it to the world, the U.S. labor movement has often been inconsistent, imperious and more often than not guided by other, often contradictory, considerations. Above all, its foreign policy is determined by its view of communism and, especially, of the Soviet Union.

A background paper prepared a year ago by the AFL-CIO staff for the executive council clearly lays out the basic perspective. "The principal threat to security in the world has its primary source in the character of the Soviet regime," the report starts. "Even if its leaders do not pull all the strings in the crisis spots of the world, a basic change in the Soviet regime would improve the possibility of a peaceful global solution. Without such a change, it is completely vain to hope that the successors of Lenin, Stalin, and eventually Brezhnev, will change their conception of 'detente' or 'peaceful coexistence' as anything other than the continuation of the struggle to achieve their aims by all possible means short of a direct recourse to force."

Thus, "behind some of the movements seeking power [in Latin America] in the

Rumblings within labor's ranks don't mean change will come quickly.

name of the struggle against old-fashioned dictatorships" are Castro and his allies. "But in all cases, the major power that must concern us in terms of developing a global strategy for the free world is the Soviet Union and the various instrumentalities and mechanisms through which they operate to achieve their objective. Again, that objective is not a major military confrontation; it is primarily to split definitely and permanently Western Europe from the United States. If they achieve this, then they can eventually gain whatever other final objective they may have in mind."

Officially, the AFL-CIO is adamantly opposed to totalitarianism of the left or right. But that view of the world—with discontent springing from strings pulled by Moscow puppeteers more than indigenous grievances—leads to an obsession with a communist threat. Kirkland, in his address to the AFL-CIO convention last fall, rejected the Jeane Kirkpatrick, neoconservative distinction between tolerable authoritarian (right-wing) regimes and unacceptable totalitarian (communist) governments. But in practice the distinction is made.

"Communism is more dangerous to the existence of free trade unions than right-wing dictatorships," David Dorn, an American Federation of Teachers international affairs expert working for the International Federation of Free Teachers Unions, said. "Right-wing dictatorships don't pretend to have free trade unions. They usually don't have an ideology that claims to work in workers' interests. So the labor movement considers communism more dangerous as misleading."

The dominant labor view also sees the

Soviet Union as expansionist, he said, not necessarily by "rolling over countries" but by exercising influence. Yet in the same perspective, the U.S. is not seen as expansionist. Although the labor movement criticized U.S. intervention against the Mexican revolution in the '20s, since then it has had no criticism of the U.S. flexing its muscles overseas. Not only did the AFL-CIO support the Vietnam war and the 1965 invasion of the Dominican Republic, but through AIFLD it also played a role in the overthrow of Allende in Chile, Goulart in Brazil and Jagan in Guyana, among other U.S. adventures, all of which would have been roundly condemned if performed by the Soviet Union.

The AFL-CIO mounted an unprecedented support campaign for Solidarity in Poland, raising \$280,000, of which about half was delivered before martial law in the form of printing equipment. But a number of liberal unions who also supported Solidarity were upset at the way the AFL-CIO and its youth organization, Frontlash, tried to turn every Solidarity event or visit into an anti-communist demonstration. They were embarrassed by plans to bring Lech Walesa to a football half-time show or have him meet with Reagan on his planned visit, partly because such moves exploited Walesa for others' political pointmaking and linked him, to his detriment, with U.S. cold warriors.

Now several unions also hesitate at Kirkland's call for severe sanctions, including calling in the Polish debt, denying further credits to the Soviet Union or Poland, embargoing grain, suspending export licenses of companies working on the Siberian gas pipeline and recalling U.S. arms negotiators from Geneva. Some suggest that U.S. sanctions alone will have little effect if other allies do not go along. To that, Kirkland replies, "It's a little like saying just because there will be hookers on the street that you should encourage your daughters to follow that trade." Others resent the use of food as a weapon. Solidarity leaders themselves appear split on the value of such sanctions.

Whatever merits tough sanction might have (and suspending arms talks is the least meritorious and most counterproductive of all the proposals), the response to events in Poland sharply contrasts with the AFL-CIO's record in various right-wing countries that the United Auto Workers (UAW) *Solidarity* recently featured as the "Polands all over the world." Turkey, South Korea and Brazil were three representative cases:

- In Turkey, 52 left-wing union leaders are on trial for their lives under the military government that seized power in 1980. The junta left intact, but without the right to strike or do much of anything, the union confederation that the AFL-CIO had helped to form (Turk-Is), but completely shut down DISK, the left confederation that had split off and was roughly half the size of Turk-Is. Despite the suppression of union activity, the torture of labor leaders and the trials, the AFL-CIO tried to prevent U.S. members of the International Metalworkers Federation from expelling Turk-Is last year because of their collaboration with the junta. The UAW, the Machinists and the Steelworkers rebuffed the pressure and voted with the majority for censure and expulsion.

- Under South Korea's new labor law, only the Federation of Korean Trade Unions and individual company-level unions are permitted to exist. As a result of the law, membership in unions has dropped by 30 to 50 percent in one year.

Until the national unions were eliminated, the AFL-CIO organization in Korea, the Asian-American Free Labor Institute, "was primarily aimed at strengthening the hand of Korean national unions rather uncritically, even when it was apparent to everyone else that they were infiltrated with government agents," Pharis Harvey, executive director of the North American Coalition for Human Rights in Korea, said. Although some local unions had grown militant, Harvey said the AFL-CIO always threw its weight behind the national unions, many of which were thoroughly corrupt. That effectively meant

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IN SHORT

Better read than dead

Readers of the *American Sentinel* (formerly the *Pink Sheet on the Left*) were recently briefed on the Institute for Policy Studies "and affiliated organizations." IPS, says the *Sentinel*, "is at the center of a network of organizations, apparently unconnected, where were established by IPS to advance its policy agenda. The program of this network is anti-defense, anti-intelligence and internal security, anti-nuclear, anti-corporation and, or course, pro-socialist and pro-revolution" (original emphasis omitted).

The article slams IPS' European affiliate, the Transnational Institute, as "a refuge for some of the most rabidly anti-American Marxists in Europe." But most emotionally satisfying for this reader is the coverage of "IPS and leftist publications": "The publications of IPS and its affiliated organizations sport colorful covers, pleasing layouts and high quality paper—inviting instant trust from a browser." *Mother Jones* scores points as "the slick and classy monthly magazine." The "left-wing tabloid *In These Times*" is rated "a sophisticated effort intended for liberal labor officials." Of *Working Papers for a New Society*, the *Sentinel* notes darkly that "in the August 1981 issue, the editor Bob Kuttner explains that a top priority of the far-left is to assume power in American politics at the community level."

The *Sentinel* survey concludes on an ominous note: "The researchers [sic] and writers who write in IPS-linked publications often cross-reference one another and draw their research from the same materials. For these academics, search for truth turns into compulsion for propaganda." Let the reader beware.

Stopping the press

The *Sentinel* may soon want to set its sights on the Central Intelligence Agency—then again, it may not. According to an article that has appeared in both *Science for the People* and *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, the CIA has been engaged in a campaign of media manipulation in an attempt to destabilize the Nicaraguan government. Fred Landis, the article's author, writes that the agency was also involved in covert media operations in Chile from 1970 to 1973 and, more recently, in Jamaica during the 1980 elections. Drawing on examples from *El Mercurio* in Chile, the *Daily Gleaner* in Jamaica and *La Prensa* in Nicaragua, Landis argues that methodical media-meddling constitutes the major thrust of U.S. propaganda in Latin America.

Typically, the CIA begins by obtaining control of an existing conservative newspaper in the targeted country. This is done by placing the publication's owner on the Board of Directors of the Inter-American Press Association (IAPA), an organization once described by a CIA official as a "covert action resource." Next, IAPA lists the country as one in which freedom of the press is threatened. The Technical Services Division of IAPA is then sent in to "modernize" the newspaper—a process that usually includes the sacking of a large portion of the staff. Finally, the paper is revamped to resemble *The National Enquirer* in tone, and news of Europe and the U.S. gives way to sensationalist local reports.

Chamber's channel

It will soon be possible to have unscrambled business for breakfast. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has launched an American Business Network, affectionately known as Biznet. Billed as "the nation's first business advocate satellite communications network," Biznet will hit the airwaves on April 26, when President Reagan has been asked to speak at the Chamber's annual meeting in Washington. According to *Broadcasting* magazine, the network will emanate from new studios at the Chamber's Washington headquarters. Its signal will be encoded and sent to a satellite, which in turn will beam the business blather across the nation. At the receiving end, a decoder will unscramble the signal so pay-TV subscribers can watch the programs.

These programs, *Broadcasting* reports, will trot through such topics as "political action," legislative and regulatory developments, economic forecasts, relevant congressional testimony, "national dialogues with leading newsmakers" and economic education. Private teleconferences also will be available. But plans are for the network to focus primarily on programs that assist the Chamber's lobbying efforts at the local level. Hundreds of organizations, ranging from local chambers of commerce to trade associations and private corporations, are expected to sign up as Biznet members.

The air at home

As the Environmental Protection Agency loosens restraints on the poisoning of America, many of its workers are getting firsthand experience on the pollution front. The *Washington Post* (via PNS Radio) reports that employees at the EPA's Superfund office happen to work over a converted garage, where carbon monoxide levels are at the government limit for factory pollution. Staffers say the air is making them sick. As for their boss, EPA Administrator Anne Gorsuch has proposed eliminating all government research on indoor pollution by next year.

—Josh Kornbluth

Citing FoIA documents, Peltier seeks new trial

Leonard Peltier, a leader of the American Indian Movement (AIM), is currently serving two consecutive life terms for "aiding and abetting" the 1975 murder of two FBI agents—even though the FBI's own files prove government agents and attorneys falsified key evidence to convict him. Now documents obtained by Peltier's attorneys under the Freedom of Information Act (FoIA) have formed the basis for a petition for a new trial filed earlier this month.

Peltier's case dates back to the early '70s, when he and other AIM leaders were targeted for surveillance, harassment and arrest under the FBI's counterintelligence program (COINTELPRO).

On June 26, 1975, two FBI agents and one Native American were killed on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota in circumstances that have never been fully established. Tried in connection with the agents' deaths, two other AIM leaders were allowed to present evidence of repeated FBI "misconduct" in Indian investigations and to detail a climate of murder and repression on the reservation. They were acquitted on the basis of self-defense. In a separate trial, Peltier was denied this defense by U.S. District Court Judge Paul Benson and was convicted.

During the trial, FBI agent Evan Hodge linked a rifle alleged to be Peltier's with a bullet casing found in a dead agent's car. Hodge testified that the FBI had performed general ballistics tests on the rifle but had not performed the more conclusive firing-pin test because the rifle was too damaged. In denying Peltier a new trial in 1978, the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals cited the bullet-casing link as the "critical piece of evidence" against Peltier.

But included in the 12,000 pages of FoIA documents is an FBI laboratory summary of the firing-pin test it performed on the rifle in question. Result? "Peltier's" rifle did not fire the casing.

A second critical component of the government's case was testimony by FBI agent Frederick Coward that he had spotted Peltier in the area of the shooting through his rifle scope. In addition to a radio transmission log that suggests no one at the scene even had a scope, the FoIA files include an FBI letter to U.S. prosecuting attorneys citing an "extreme mirage factor" in their simulated tests using such a scope. Positive identification, they concluded, was virtually impossible.

Evidence in the FoIA files also contradicts U.S. Attorney Evan Hultman's statements to an 8th Circuit Court of Appeals judge. The documents show the judge chastising Hultman for using "obviously false affidavits" in 1975 to extradite Peltier from Canada, where the AIM leader had fled because he felt he would not get a fair trial. Hultman told the judge that while he could tell the affidavits to be false as soon as he read them, he had not seen them until they had already been

submitted to the Canadian government. An FBI memo to Hultman and fellow U.S. attorney Robert Sikma, however, requested their concurrence before submitting the two affidavits in question.

Will Peltier get a new trial? At least three FBI agents and three U.S. attorneys are implicated in wrongdoing, including perjury and the falsification and suppression of evidence. There is additional evidence that government officials provoked Peltier's 1979 escape from prison (he was recaptured) in order to kill him. But the judge who will rule on the new trial motion is Paul Benson, the same judge who ruled against defense motions throughout the original trial.

—Jan Elizabeth Stites



Grenadians are resisting the Reagan administration's attempts to isolate them from other nations in the region.

Fun and guns in Caribbean

BRIDGETOWN, BARBADOS—As with so many aspects of the Reagan administration, image and reality have begun to fuse in the government's Caribbean Basin Initiative. Shortly after President Reagan announced his six-point plan for private enterprise in the region, the White House announced that the president and first lady will spend five days in Barbados in mid-April. They were invited not by the government of Barbados, but by an old friend of the Reagans and star of *It Happened One Night*, Claudette Colbert.

At almost exactly the same time in April, the U.S. Navy is planning a massive exercise in the Caribbean that will include an amphibious landing at the U.S. base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The maneuvers, called "Ocean Ventures '82," will involve the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines and, according to the Defense Department, will

last for several weeks.

The president's holiday is described by the White House as a "working vacation," and that, no doubt, is true. Reagan is scheduled to take time for "informal chats" with Barbados Prime Minister Tom Adams and other unmentioned leaders of the eastern Caribbean.

Barbados is the linchpin of the U.S. counteroffensive against Grenada—recipient of recently increased military assistance, site of the U.S. embassy for the eastern Caribbean countries and, along with the Seaga government in Jamaica, the latest showplace for private enterprise in the region. Prime Minister Adams is a Caribbean politician of the old school who has had a running personal feud with Maurice Bishop of Grenada.

In late January, Adams made a highly unusual visit to Guyana for talks with President Forbes Burnham—officially, to discuss "regional security and defense." Burnham, until recently a par-

tiah in the region because of widespread political repression in Guyana, then flew to Antigua, a newly independent island in the Windwards, for private talks with Prime Minister Vere Bird. The issue this time, according to the Barbados press, was the agenda for a Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM) summit meeting later this year.

Grenada, also a member of CARICOM, has yet to be consulted about the proposed summit. The U.S. began to encourage the isolation of Grenada within the trade federation when it expressly excluded the island from \$4.9 million in Project Development Assistance given to the other nations of the eastern Caribbean in December.

"We are still members of CARICOM, the Caribbean Development Bank and the Organization of American States," says Grenada's minister of national mobilization, Selwyn Strachan. "We have good relations with every government in the region, and will do all that we can to prevent the United States from isolating us."

—Thomas Brom

Original articles, news clips, memos, press releases, reports, anecdotes—send them all to "In Short," c/o *In These Times*, 1509 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60622. Please include your address and phone number.

Briefing: Chain reaction

News and notes on nuclear energy, nuclear weapons and the antinuclear movement.

In a new safety goal proposed last month, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission finally spelled out how safe it thinks nuclear energy really is. The NRC acknowledged—for the first time—that accidents *will* happen, even under the best conditions, but said that nuclear fatalities "should not exceed one-tenth of one percent" of all other accidental deaths in the U.S. In an addendum to the proposal, NRC Commissioner Peter Bradford translated the percentages into real numbers: The document, he wrote, "contains an implicit maximum theoretical acceptable consequence from nuclear power plant accidents of some 13,000 deaths over the [30-year] life of the 150 plants." The optimum safety goal of 13,000 was omitted from the body of the report because a majority of the commissioners thought the number would be misleading.

"Every industrial endeavor poses a certain risk," echoed a spokesman for the pronuclear Atomic Industrial Forum (AIF) when the report was released. If the NRC and AIF believe that 13,000 deaths are safe, imagine what they'd think is really dangerous....

In May, Pennsylvanians living near Three Mile Island will be able to express their opinion on whether they'd like to be among the select 13,000. Three years after the country's worst commercial nuclear accident, voters in Dauphin and Cumberland counties will declare their preference in a nonbinding referendum on the restart of TMI's undamaged Unit 1 reactor. The Pennsylvania Council of Churches and 17 town governments have already gone on record against restart. Unit 1 won't be ready to go on-line until nearly 10,000 corroded pipes in its steam generator are fixed; repairs could take several months. Also holding up restart are court-ordered hearings on TMI's impact on the psychological well-being of nearby residents.

Even though the referendum will have only an indirect effect—if any—on the restart decision, it seems that some people don't like the idea of asking anyone without a Ph.D. in physics about TMI. "It's a terribly complicated question to put on the ballot," said Pennsylvania Governor Dick Thornburgh, explaining his opposition to the measure.

At a recent meeting between President Reagan and newspaper editors from around the country, a Harrisburg editor asked the president what he thought of the referendum. "I believe in democracy and in the people's right to vote, and I defend it very, very much," Reagan

replied after praising nuclear energy as "essential to this country and to world development." "But I don't believe in an issue of this kind that they [the voters] can have the information that is necessary for that decision," Reagan claimed that even he wasn't qualified to comment on the restart of Unit 1, and neither were TMI opponents. "The antinuclear forces in this country have been basing their views on a lack of information," he said. "I'm not going to say they are ignorant. It's that they know so many things that aren't true."

To prevent nuclear critics from getting too smart, the NRC refused to allow members of the New York Public Interest Research Group and the Union of Concerned Scientists into the control room of the Unit 3 Indian Point nuclear power plant during an evacuation drill on March 3. The two groups are legal intervenors in a safety hearing on Indian Point, located 24 miles north of New York City. They wanted to observe how plant operators might act during an

accident.

Unit 3's owner, the Power Authority of the State of New York (PASNY), managed to convince the NRC that two antinuclear observers might damage the control room or disrupt the emergency drill because they were "avowed opponents of the continued operation of Indian Point."

PASNY crowded the control room with guests from other New York utilities, including Rochester Gas and Electric, which recently bungled emergency planning at its Ginna plant. (RG&E wasn't sure which way the wind was blowing during the Ginna accident and sent government officials, who were there to measure radiation, in the wrong direction at the most crucial time.) Despite glaring flaws in the Indian Point drill, the NRC praised PASNY's performance.

Update: Last month a federal district court judge blocked shipments of nuclear waste through New York City, upholding a citywide ban enacted in 1977. Utilities have promised a long legal fight to overturn the New York law and the other 220 local ordinances that make nuclear waste transportation so inconvenient.

—Susan Jaffe

Susan Jaffe also reports on nuclear issues for the Village Voice.



In Alabama, several disabled textile workers have found omissions and distortions in their workplace medical records.

Man finds out he is pregnant

FAIRFAX, AL—"I'm burning my records today because, as far as I am concerned, these records are a bunch of lies," said Robert Lewis, a disabled textile worker. Lewis and nine other members of the Alabama Brown Lung Association (BLA) burned the documents on March 11 to protest their former employers' refusal, in an apparent violation of federal law, to provide complete medical records.

The records, particularly those containing the results of the company-administered pulmonary function tests, are critical in determining when workers first began having breathing problems and what the companies knew about the workers' condition.

According to a 1980 OSHA regulation, companies have 15 days from the date of a written request to provide complete medical records, including exposure levels to toxic substances and any compilation of data based on a worker's individual records. But BLA members say they are receiving incomplete and inaccurate information.

Bessie Davis, a weaver who worked at Mt. Vernon Mills in Tallahassee, Ala., said sarcastically that she burned her records to "illustrate their value." Davis, 53, believes her records were tampered with after she request-

ed them. "What good does it do to take a breathing test if they don't tell you the results, or if they change the scores on you?"

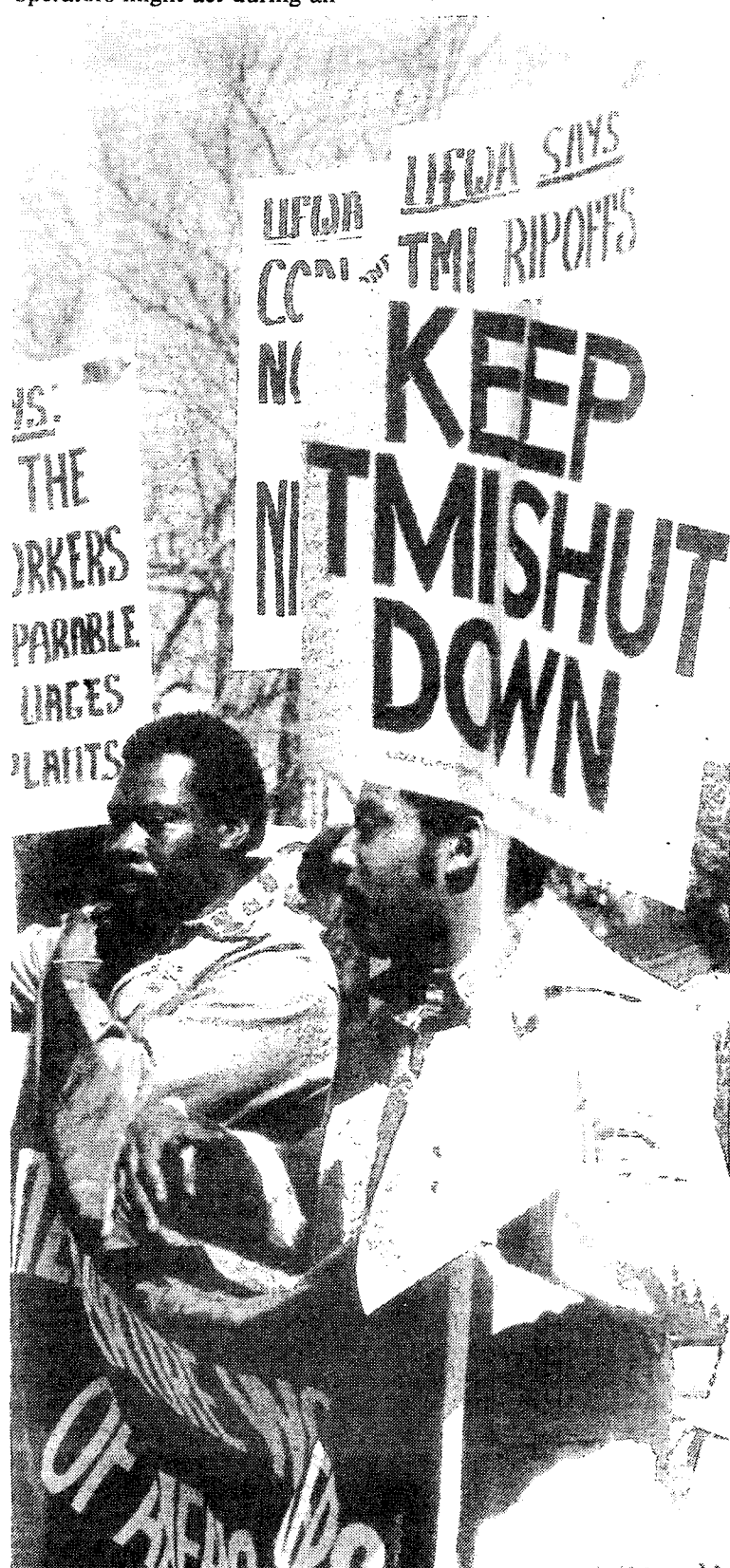
"All along, the mill company told me my breathing was OK," Davis wrote in a formal complaint to OSHA. "They never mentioned about it going down. Never.... On some of my papers, they had numbers crossed off and wrote in new ones. I signed some papers, but not the ones marked through like that."

Dennis Brown, who in 1973 became disabled from his job at West Point Pepperell Inc. with "chronic obstructive lung disease," fought for his medical records for more than six months. When he finally received them, he said, "all it had on it was a list of all the small injuries that happened years ago. The medical report I got was not worth the paper it was written on, and all the company has ever cared for is the almighty dollar."

Then there's the case of Robert Lewis, a former weaver for Opelika Manufacturing Corporation here. Lewis' records contained no results of his pulmonary function tests, although he had received five of them during his last few years at work. Instead, his records showed he had experienced "menstrual bleeding" and that he was "pregnant."

"These records are a bunch of lies," said Lewis, 64. "They didn't say anything about the breathing problems my wife listens to while I sleep, even though the tests proved it."

—Bill Adler



Labor

Continued from page 3

also siding with management and the government. When the U.S. Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) newspaper attacked the dictatorship and wrote favorably about the Urban Industrial Mission, a group helping local unions that was founded by religious organizations, the AFL-CIO protested.

"The gist of the message," a newspaper staff person recalled, "was that 'you guys are crazy' and that the people we were supporting, the Urban Industrial Mission, were communists inspired by North Korea and trying to subvert South Korea."

The AFL-CIO has made no public protest about the destruction of the labor movement in South Korea. ACTWU and other unions have had their bargaining positions undermined by cheap Korean imports, spurring protectionist sentiments.

The current director of AIFLD, William Doherty, admitted that AIFLD students were involved in the 1964 coup in Brazil. Afterward, AIFLD helped to train government-appointed officials to replace leaders removed from their posts under the labor laws modeled on Mussolini's Italy. An independent labor movement nevertheless began to emerge in the late '70s. But the government struck back. Thirteen leaders of a major 1980 metalworkers strike, including Luis Inacio da Silva or "Lula," the Walesa of Brazil, were sentenced last year to three-and-one-half years in prison for striking. Lula and four other people are also on trial for speaking at a rally in support of farmworkers a few days before some workers killed a hated foreman.

Although many U.S. unions individually have supported Lula, he has shun-

tively involved in training groups implicated in precipitating the downfall of Allende and, as a consequence, the suppression of all trade unions.

At its last executive council meeting, the AFL-CIO condemned South Africa for the death in detention of Neil Aggett, the young white doctor who was secretary to a black trade union, and renewed its pledge of support for the black trade union movement. But the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists chides the AFL-CIO for moving too cautiously and for not supporting majority rule. The Coalition also criticizes the AFL-CIO for having no relationship with the union federation in exile that is affiliated with the African National Congress, the leading anti-apartheid organization, undoubtedly because of its reputed communist ties. In Angola the AFL-CIO actively supports the rebel UNITA group against the black leftist government. It is also backed by South Africa.

A tough case.

But the most ticklish dilemma for the AFL-CIO is El Salvador. AIFLD has been involved in the country, with the exception of a six-year expulsion, since 1962, primarily helping to organize the Union Comunal Salvadoreña (UCS), a peasant organization. AIFLD, especially through the work of Roy Prosterman, formerly an architect of a counterinsurgency land reform plan in Vietnam, influenced the formulation of the junta's land reform plan. In particular it added a third phase, or "land to the tillers" plan, that would legalize many small landholdings.

As the junta degenerated and most left-to-moderate political figures abandoned it, violence increased. Much of it was in conjunction with the land reform. In 1981, the AFL-CIO convention voted to make further military aid to the government dependent on substantial progress toward land reform, free elections, human rights guarantees and control of the "death squads."

union leaders who offer Duarte critical support. However, much of the tiny labor movement, if not destroyed, is aligned with the Front. That includes the once-strong teachers union (ANDES), which has lost more than 360 members to the government and right-wing assassins.

Land reform failures.

But the highly touted land reform program was seriously criticized in a December 10, 1981, report by the UCS. It stated that less than 10 percent of peasants under the "land to the tiller" plan had received provisional titles and more than 25,000 families had been illegally evicted from their land, often by the army, with more evictions expected this spring. About half of the peasants have also been forced by former landlords to pay illegal rents.

"What had begun in March and April of 1980 with bright promise," the report reads, "and had continued to show bright promise even through the end of 1980, now threatens to become a nightmare of bureaucratic red tape, evictions and killings, in which it will soon be beyond the capacity of the government or the campesino leadership to prevent a complete loss of faith by our country's campesinos in the agrarian reform program."

Despite that assessment, Doherty has testified in Congress over the past two months about the great successes of the land reform. He also referred to the UCS people who prepared the report as "those who have suffered most by the violence attributable to the extreme right and the Marxist-Leninist left."

Yet the UCS report does not blame the left for any of the 92 deaths last year of its members and officials. In 47 instances the perpetrators were members of the army. The other security forces and armed civilians were responsible in all other cases where the murderers could be identified. Such information does not fit the center-caught-between-left-and-right story that AIFLD wishes to perpetuate.

pid," Gómez said of the AIFLD. "They're out of touch. They have obsolete people with obsolete mentalities, very cold war. They still think changes in Latin America will be done through existing institutions. They live in Alice-in-Wonderland environment, like the Salvadoran army will suddenly become progressive. They were good at first, but they wanted to control the union and fill people with this anti-communist bullshit. In Latin America we have to learn to co-exist with the Marxists. All this crap about if you're a Marxist union, you're the enemy is not true and they say it is. They won't say go kill the Marxists, but they will say, 'Don't complain if you see one shot by the army.'"

Most peasants, Gómez argues, might belong to the Catholic-sponsored "communities of the base" for religious reasons, join the UCS to get some benefits and still work with the FDR or the guerrillas. "We don't see any serious difference between the Frente and what the campesino wants. But by becoming part of the Frente we would lose our own political space. That doesn't mean the campesinos of UCS are not in support of the Frente, because they are, but we have our own position."

If there is a negotiated settlement, he says, the political forces in the FDR and independent groups like the UCS will have more influence. But if the policies of Reagan and the junta continue, the hand of the guerrillas will be strengthened. As in so many other cases, the hard-line anti-communism of the AFL-CIO undermines its own expressed interest in a democratic, reformist government.

"Their priorities are not so much development but to stop communism," Gómez says of the AIFLD. "It automatically puts them in bed with the most repressive governments in the world."

Rejecting the cold war.

Such priorities and their implications seem unreasonable to a small block within the labor movement, but one that is already larger than in Vietnam war days. Memories of that wrenching time still affect them. "My perception is that the AFL-CIO is still fighting the cold war," National Education Association (NEA) international representative Braulio Alonso said. "Everything is either communism or Americanism, or Western capitalism. There are many gray areas in between. We're forcing people to take sides. The world is more complex than that."

UAW president Douglas Fraser, a new member of the AFL-CIO executive council international affairs committee, also wants labor to adopt a less rigid foreign policy. "From my perspective we have to have a bit more balanced view than is now the policy," he said. "The policy is sort of paranoid about the Soviet Union. I'm not saying that we shouldn't be alert to them. But there's a difference between being alert, conscious of communist interest in expansion, and being paranoid."

At the initiative of Jacob Sheinkman, secretary-treasurer of the Clothing and Textile Workers (ACTWU), Fraser and William Winpisinger, president of the Machinists, sent a letter to Congress protesting military aid to El Salvador last fall under the heading of the Labor Committee for Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador. It, in turn, had been inspired by a New York area committee. Other labor committees have been formed in the San Jose-San Francisco area, Chicago and a few other cities. Now Kenneth Brown of the Graphic Arts union, Robert Goss of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, Frank Martino of the International Chemical Workers, Charles Perlik of the Newspaper Guild, Willard McGuire of the National Education Association, John Sweeney of the Service Employees and Ed Asner of the Screen Actors Guild have joined. The committee plans to repudiate the March 28 elections as fraudulent and incapable of providing a political solution. While opposing any outside aid or intervention and criticizing Reagan's certification of human rights progress, the committee calls for a negotiated settlement.

"I don't want to see ourselves get en-

Continued on page 22



ned any connection with the AFL-CIO because of its ties to AIFLD. Kirkland has reportedly sent a telegram in his behalf, but otherwise the AFL-CIO has said little about Brazil.

"There may be lapses from time to time," an AFL-CIO representative said about the criticism that right-wing regimes often are treated gently by the AFL-CIO. "It's a big world."

Some rightist governments have been criticized. Kirkland recently condemned the Pinochet junta in Chile in very strong terms after the brutal murder of one of the AFL-CIO's union friends in Chile. Indeed, the AFL-CIO has criticized the junta since its inception, although the original statements focused more on denunciations of the overthrown Allende regime.

The irony of these recent strong denunciations is twofold. First, it has taken a long time; the AFL-CIO refused to support earlier strong action against the junta, such as a short, symbolic boycott called by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). Besides, AIFLD and several U.S. unions were ac-

"We are not supporting either the government or those who want to overthrow and put in another—worse—government at the point of a gun," Kirkland said in February. "We're advocating free elections. We're advocating democratic, social and economic reforms." Kirkland's presumption that the opposition would be "worse" than the present government—along with the inclination he and AIFLD people have to describe the opposition always as "guerrillas" and "Marxist-Leninists" despite the array of political forces in the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR)—indicates both their bias in favor of the Duarte regime and their refusal to work with the political forces in the FDR.

In order to defend their position, AIFLD generates a steady stream of misinformation—exaggerating the success of the land reform, misrepresenting the FDR as opposed to land reform and attempting to maintain the myths of a government caught between right and left and of peasants victimized by right and left. They seek their legitimacy through the UCS and a few Salvadoran trade

As a consequence, AIFLD has done very little, if anything, to make a *cause celebre* out of the murders of its own group's members.

Francisco Altschul, representative of the Front in the U.S., called the charge that the FDR opposed land reform "completely false." "Regarding this [the junta's] agrarian reform, what we have said is in theory it might be okay, it might not," Altschul said. "What's important is that it has been done for the clear political point of counterinsurgency." Altschul criticized the "land to the tiller" as "institutionalizing the mini-fundia, very small pieces of land. Productivity is low and you can't provide efficient technical assistance, and can't market efficiently." The FDR proposes a mix of private ownership, cooperatives and state ownership with land kept in the most productive units.

The most devastating critique of AIFLD's past and present role comes from Leonel Gomez, a top official in the UCS for more than a dozen years now in exile in the U.S. after numerous assassination attempts. "To me, they're just plain stu-

CENTRAL AMERICA

Salvador: tale of two contests



Guerrillas say their stepped-up attacks are aimed at rendering the elections "irrelevant before the votes are counted."

By John Dinges

SAN SALVADOR

WHEN THE GOVERNMENT announced a year ago the date of this month's elections in El Salvador, the planners had in mind a scenario of a country virtually at peace by now. A massive "final offensive" launched by the guerrillas in January 1981 had failed to ignite an insurrection. Government spokesmen and U.S. officials proclaimed the guerrillas' military defeat, with only mopping-up operations needed to eliminate the remaining resistance.

At about the same time, the guerrillas and their civilian allies made overtures through the Salvadoran Catholic Church and the Socialist International that they wanted negotiations to end the conflict. Seeing this as a sign of weakness, the Duarte government and the U.S. launched a two-stage strategy—a military "pacification program" carried out with elite search-and-destroy units trained by U.S. advisers, followed by offers to the leftists to join in the elections once their guerrilla allies had been defeated.

Now, a year later, almost the opposite has happened. Instead of a pacified countryside, the war is raging as never before. Rather than a democratically consecrated ratification of the present civilian-military coalition, its centrist Christian Democratic leaders and the program of reforms, a boycott of the elections by all the left parties finds the Christian Democrats without potential allies.

As election day approaches—assuming that the announced guerrilla offensive will again be less than final—a likely outcome is a new alliance between the military and the right-wing parties running in the election. Their one vital agreement is opposition to the Christian Democrats.

These are the scenes of El Salvador's election, scheduled for March 28—an election billed by the Reagan administration as a return to democracy and a "political solution" to the civil war that has cost 30,000 lives since 1979. Voters will choose 60 members of an assembly empowered to write a new constitution and—more

significantly—will confirm or dismiss Christian Democratic President Jose Napoleon Duarte and the other members of the junta.

The headquarters of the Salvadoran electoral commission is an ample stucco house in a smartly affluent residential district here. A squad of five soldiers guards the entrance. Bodyguards wait in the driveway next to the armored van used by Jorge Bustamante, the 59-year-old gynecologist who is organizing this Sunday's elections.

Inside Bustamante's office, next to the demonstration voting booth with its clear plastic ballot depository, is a sign that says: "Ballots, Yes. Bullets, No."

To those who question the feasibility of holding elections in the midst of civil war, Bustamante has a ready reply: We can hold elections "the same way that England held elections after the defeat of Dunkirk. They were in the middle of a very, very serious war, and they elected Winston Churchill as prime minister. The election is a way to get away from a war."

But the guerrilla war against the government rages on a separate plane. The Salvadoran army and the Farabundo Marti Liberation Front guerrillas are non-contenders in a political process whose ultimate effect, if any, on the outcome of their war is the overriding unanswered question. By some estimates, voting will be impossible in at least one-fourth of the country either under guerrilla control or the scene of intense warfare.

Most political activity happens here in San Salvador, where Bustamante in his armored van and foreign reporters in their taxis shuttle between the mini-fortresses that are the nerve centers of the campaign. The most imposing is the U.S. embassy, its high walls lined with sandbags and gun emplacements, its diplomats busy mediating local procedural disputes, providing anti-communist campaign literature and briefing a stream of visiting U.S. congressmen.

Two miles away, at Christian Democratic headquarters—President Duarte's party—muscular, unsmiling young men in civilian clothes scrutinize a visitor's credentials before opening an iron gate.

The men, and four more like them inside, carry Uzi submachine guns, the silvery, short weapon capable of being concealed inside a suit coat—and of spitting out two dozen bullets in less than three seconds.

A party spokesman said 300 Christian Democrats, including 90 government officials, have been murdered since 1979. In all but a few cases, he said, the killers were rightist death squads doing the bidding of those who opposed the land and banking reforms instituted when the Christian Democrats joined the government.

In a hallway, a dog-eared poster proclaims the "First Peaceful Revolution of America—Oct. 15, 1979"—a reference to the coup of reform-minded officers who overthrew military dictator Carlos Humberto Romero, the latest in the country's long line of military rulers that goes back to 1932.

Romero is in exile, but his party, the National Reconciliation Party, retains close ties to the military and is a strong contender in the elections. On Jan. 27, the night before campaigning officially opened, party leader Rodriguez Gonzalez was gunned down near his home. Party leaders claimed rivals on the right were responsible.

The third major contender is the Nationalist Republican Alliance, the farthest right on an electoral spectrum that includes no left or center-left candidates. The party leader is Roberto D'Aubuisson, a former National Guard major who was in charge of Romero's intelligence service and is identified in U.S. embassy "briefing notes" on the election as "considered leader of right-wing extremists, was arrested in May 1980 on charges of conspiracy to overthrow the government."

Appearing before a congressional committee last year, former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White presented documents that he said contained "compelling" evidence that D'Aubuisson had masterminded the March 1980 assassination of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero.

Bettors' favorite.

Now, D'Aubuisson campaigns with great fanfare in the countryside and he appears to be the only candidate to have ignited a semblance of popular support by appealing to large landowners and "loyal" peasants who make up the rightist paramilitary militia, Orden. On a recent trip north of San Salvador, he drove in an ar-

mored car in the midst of a convoy of jeeps and trucks bristling with paramilitary cadre with automatic weapons. At a small farming village, his escorts set up machine-gun nests, then called villagers to the town square to hear D'Aubuisson promise to throw out the "communist" Christian Democrats, turn loose the army and security forces and exterminate the guerrilla forces within three months.

D'Aubuisson has campaigned openly while other parties' candidates were making unannounced, almost furtive public appearances. Projecting an image of "machismo," enhanced by his clearly strong ties to the military, he is the bettors' favorite in the election.

In a country plagued in the past by well-documented electoral fraud, with no reliable voter registration and voter rolls further decimated by thousands of war casualties either dead or in refugee camps, analysis of the results will be complicated and controversial.

There are, in fact, two contests. The

The question in El Salvador: What if they held elections and nobody came?

first is between Duarte's Christian Democrats and their program of reform and the other right-wing parties—all of which oppose the reforms with varying degrees of vehemence. That contest will be determined by a headcount of the 60 delegates elected according to a system of proportional representation. A majority formed by one party or a coalition of parties will appoint a new junta as a "provisional government."

"At this moment, we have no allies. It is essential that we win a majority," said Christian Democratic Party secretary Julio Samayoa, who is also the government's minister of labor.

A top Christian Democrat, who asked not to be identified, said his party would be forced into opposition and probably into hiding if D'Aubuisson's party wins or is able to lead a new rightist coalition government. "They will roll back the agrarian reform, take away the peasants' land again. And the only way to do that is to kill them—then you will really see a civil war," he said.

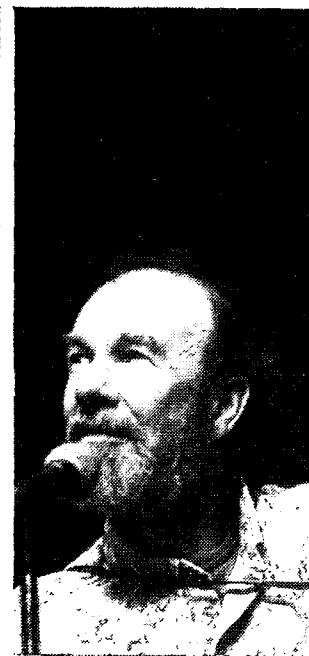
The current alliance between the military and the reformist Christian Democrats is an anomaly, and a victory of the right-wing parties would restore the more traditional rightist-military partnership.

Since the Christian Democrats joined the government, there have been several attempted coups. But until now, strong U.S. support of the Christian Democrats

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Election

Continued from preceding page

and their reforms has been sufficient to ward off the military plotters, although the rightists in the military have successfully eliminated most of the original "young officers movement" who favored reforms from command positions.

The second contest is between those who accept the elections and those who don't. At stake is the international recognition of the Salvadoran government and support for its war effort. If carried off smoothly, with a respectably high voter turnout and duly certified as fraud-free by international observers, Sunday's voting could succeed in conferring the mantle of legitimacy on a government until now tainted by the inability of its civilian component to stop its military partner's brutality against the civilian population.

The Reagan administration has said it will support whatever government emerges from the election. "At present, we will anticipate the dissolution of the military junta probably in late June or early July and have a return to civilian government, democratically elected. That will be a step back to the re-establishment of the rule of law instead of force," Ambassador Hinton has said.

A turnout of 800,000, Hinton said, would be a "bloody miracle." He would consider a 40 percent turnout (520,000) "reputable" and 50 percent (650,000) "as good as has ever been done honestly." Hinton, therefore, puts a floor of around



In this Sunday's election it will be impossible to vote in at least the one-fourth of the country now under guerrilla control.

500,000 votes as a test of legitimacy, although he cautioned that he didn't want "to play the numbers game."

Taking sides.

International side-taking has also been a factor. Bustamante, the election organizer, said he had invited 60 countries to send observers to certify the fairness of the balloting and was confident they would all come. But of major Western powers, only the U.S. and Britain have accepted the invitation. The Organization

of American States—with a majority of right-wing military governments, joined by democratic Colombia, Costa Rica and Venezuela—has endorsed the Salvadoran elections.

The Salvadoran Catholic church—long a key force for change in El Salvador—is divided on the elections. The acting primate, Msgr. Arturo Rivera y Damas, questioned the advisability of the elections in homilies pointing to the impossibility of safe participation by leftist parties and the dilemma of the average citizen fearful

that voting or not voting might bring reprisals from one side or the other. But the Episcopal Conference, the organization of the country's five bishops in which Rivera y Damas is a minority of one, approved a statement in late January urging Salvadorans to vote.

Bustamante, who spent part of his student years in the U.S. and speaks English with a Chicago accent, sees himself as a peacemaker in organizing the elections. An avowed anti-communist, he participated as a member of the now-defunct Liberal Party in an abortive uprising in the '40s against military rule. He said ultra right-wing leader D'Aubuisson, "just like Hitler," does not even "wear a mask that he believes in democracy."

The Christian Democrats and the army have an ungainly partnership in the government, he said. "The [PDC] and the army may be married, but they will never go to bed together. This is a marriage of the living room, not of the bedroom." He called the leaders of the FDR his "good friends" and said "the guys in the guerrillas are our brothers. We have to respect their ideals," but they are manipulated by "politicians" who just want to "grab power."

• Sipping a scotch at the luxurious, but nearly empty, El Presidente Hotel, he said he still held out the hope that left politicians will lay down their arms and accept the electoral commission offer of free TV and radio time to allow them to campaign with canned spots instead of public appearances that, he acknowledged, would mean almost certain death.

"They have lost faith," he said, and were unwilling to lay down their arms. Without leftist participation, Bustamante said, the elections could not end the war, but could only be the "end of the beginning" of the country's struggle to return to peace.

According to the electoral law drawn up by the junta for the elections, the armed forces are to remain aloof, trying to guarantee peace on election day but taking no active political role. The 20,000 members of the armed forces are not allowed to vote.

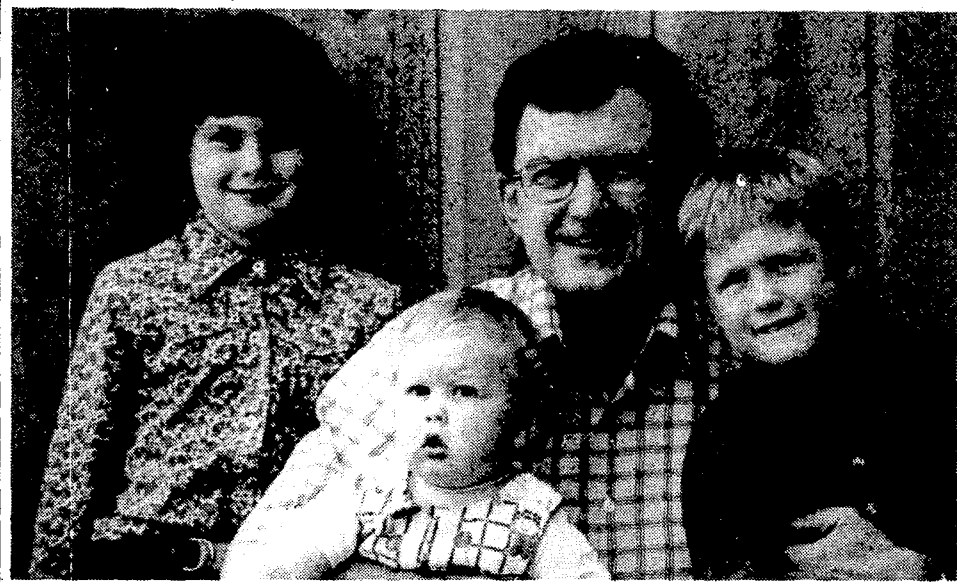
"The people in the army know perfectly well that this is the last call. Either they become democrats or they perish," he said.

Meanwhile, in the countryside army and guerrillas fight it out with little overt effort to influence the balloting. While U.S. and Salvadoran officials charge the guerrillas with seeking to disrupt the elections, guerrilla leaders interviewed in camps here and outside the country say their stepped-up attacks are not aimed at affecting the elections but at rendering them "irrelevant before the votes are counted."

And in San Salvador, Ambassador Hinton appears to be looking beyond the ballots to the need for more bullets. "It also seems to me," he said, "given the nature of the opposition, that [the new] government will have to continue the plan to build up the armed forces and be prepared to pursue the war."

John Dinges is the co-author, with Saul Landau, of *Assassination on Embassy Row*.

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CENTRAL AMERICA



Guatemala has a new president, yet instability reigns

By Nelson Santana

GUATEMALA CITY

A PLEASANT LITTLE PLAZA on Guatemala City's Sixth Avenue is a study in foliage and concrete. On the other side of Tenth Street stands the national police headquarters, a stunning structure of graceful arches and Moorish spires, the bailiwick of Colonel Chupina, one of the most feared men in Guatemala.

The plaza does not reflect what may or may not be going on across the street. Men in shabby polyester pants sit on the concrete sidewalks scooping black beans into their mouths with corn tortillas. And an Indian woman in her red embroidered blouse poses with her child in front of a man snapping photos—her expression of intense concentration betraying the importance of the occasion.

Eighteen-year-old Flavio has been shining shoes on the plaza for 10 years now and is regarded as the unofficial

boss of those who man the 10 shine stands along the sidewalk. He works 10 hours a day and takes home \$6 to \$8. He lives with his woman friend, who is not his wife, but he manages since he has no children yet and pays \$15 a month rent. Flavio cast his first vote last week in the presidential elections, but he cast it "en blanco," for none of the four right-wing

candidates in the race.

"It came out in the paper that if you didn't vote you could get 60 days in jail and a \$20 fine," he explains cheerfully. "There's a lot of death around this country. They stop you and look at your papers all the time. I was afraid that if I didn't have mine stamped that I had voted, I'd get into trouble. So I cast a blank vote."

More than a week after the Guatemalan elections, things are only slightly more confused here than normal. Almost everyone in a random sample—ranging from shoeshiners to plastics magnates—believes that there was fraud committed in the election of General Anibal Guevara, but no one seems inclined to do much about it. Two days after the election the two favored candidates (Guevara was predicted to come in third if the election was "clean") began to marshal a protest. The opposition paired right-wing leader Mario Sandoval—founder of La Mano Blanca, the coun-

Almost everyone in a random sample—ranging from shoeshiners to plastics magnates—believes that the election of General Anibal Guevara was a fraud. But no one seems inclined to do much about it.

try's most active death squad—with the coalition of the Christian Democrats, a party that has lost 240 leaders to right-wing violence since 1980 (including three candidates on election day).

No comment.

The Christian Democrats' coalition presidential candidate, Alejandro Maldonado, had been a member of Sandoval's National Liberation Movement (MLN) until a friendly parting in 1977. Maldonado had campaigned on a vaguely reformist, anti-death squad platform and privately hinted that he would negotiate with the guerrilla forces, a position that won him support in the hardhit northwestern region of the country. Meanwhile, Sandoval, who calls himself "the world's greatest gladiator against communism," had promised to devote all of the government's resources and capabilities to the struggle against subversion. Oddly enough, the unholy alliance between the two provoked little comment.

And any momentum for protest petered out quickly. The Guatemalan Congress—dominated by Guevara's official party—rushed into a special session on March 13 to confirm the Guevara victory. The opposition called a horn-honking campaign to protest the election, but it was frustrated when police began to drag drivers out of their cars, hit them with fines and fire guns into the air. A further attempt to organize a march or a one-hour strike for March 15 also fizzled.

Guatemala seems to have ended up with Guevara, but few know what that means. A squat, gap-toothed man with a mustache, Guevara is the result of a drawn-out selection process from within the closed fraternity of the Guatemalan military, and he has neither a public image nor a clear constituency of his own. He is believed to be the common denominator choice of a cabal of behind-the-scenes strongmen including Generals (Benedicto) Lucas, Kjell, Langerud (a former president), Martinez and national police head Chupina. But Lucas, the dynamic younger brother of outgoing president Romero Lucas Garcia, is believed to have political ambitions of his own.

"General Benny," as he is known, recently launched a self-promotion campaign mainly through the offices of the international press, which he has been treating to free helicopter rides to "pacified" regions of Quiché. Lucas talks a reformist line and has persuaded many that he could be the "Torrijos" of Guatemala. Coup predictions are cropping up in the capital. Lucas counts on the unswerving loyalty of his enlisted men, and should the government of Guevara falter, many believe he could assume the presidency in six to 18 months.

Push for armaments.

Such a move would not necessarily inconvenience the Reagan administration, which could hardly do worse than Guevara, especially considering the accusations of fraud. The Guatemalan military is pushing hard for U.S. armaments. The army, which stands at nearly 40,000 men following a large-scale conscription campaign, is aggressively arming sectors of the civilian population in vigilante bands against the guerrillas.

But the abysmal human rights situation that has so far blocked the provision of U.S. arms is by no means improving. In fact, there are signs that political murders have risen sharply among sectors of the right as well. Two of Sandoval's bodyguards were killed the week of elections, apparently by Guevara's henchmen, who may well have been avenging the death of a Guevara bodyguard the previous week. Reports of heavy fighting between guerrillas and government forces in the north are just beginning to edge back into the newspapers' headlines. During the war for Guatemala's presidency, little attention has been paid to the guerrillas because the candidates have been too busy fighting each other.

Nelson Santana reports regularly for *In These Times* on Central American affairs.

IRELAND

New premier, new promises

By Jack Kurt Jacobsen

"I NEVER SAW ANYTHING LIKE it," marveled a canvasser for Charles Haughey's Fianna Fail Party before the inconclusive Feb. 18 election in the fiscally scourged Irish Republic. "Oul wans [old women] wanting to know about borrowing requirements!"

Promising a "humane way" toward financial rectitude, Charles Haughey was conditionally restored to the premiership at a March 9 parliamentary vote, when three Sinn Fein Workers Party (SFWP) members and two independent socialists cast their votes for him and against the Uriah Heepish budget urged by Garret Fitzgerald's short-lived (28 weeks) Fine Gael-Labour Coalition.

Like Fitzgerald, Haughey now will serve as prime minister at the mercy of a small band of socialists who reserve the right to force another election should policies veer rightward. This all makes for suspenseful viewing in a nation afflicted by 13 percent unemployment (a record high equalling Britain's rate), a 23 percent inflation rate, a burgeoning debt that requires more than 40 percent of total revenues to service and, until Greece's entry, the lowest wages and living standards in the European Economic Community (EEC). (The gap between average EEC living standards and Irish ones has grown since Ireland's entry in 1973.)

But Haughey probably will not make Fitzgerald's fatal mistake of taking for granted the support of independent deputies. Fitzgerald's Coalition fell in late January when four independent support-



Garret Fitzgerald's (above) short-lived coalition fell in late January when four independent supporters defected to vote against his austerity-for-all budget.

ers defected to vote against his austerity-for-all budget. "The whole thrust of the budget was to get the money needed from the workers," explained Joe Sherlock of the SFWP, "through increased social welfare contributions [and] income tax which would automatically increase with inflation and indirect taxes."

In last June's election, like now, neither Finna Fail (with 78 seats) nor the

Coalition (with 80 seats) could muster the 84 seats needed to form a majority government until the independent deputies tipped the scales for Fitzgerald. He then rushed to redress the profligate ways of his Fianna Fail predecessors.

To slice the annual borrowing requirements and the public deficit in half, Fitzgerald proceeded to cut public expenditures by abolishing food subsidies, raising social insurance contributions from 4.75 percent to 7.25 percent, taxing short-term social welfare payments, raising the "value added tax" to 18 percent and for the first time extending it to footwear and clothing, restoring some prescription and other medical services to a fee basis, prohibiting expansion of public sector employment and increasing a host of indirect taxes. (The food subsidy cuts and the indirect taxes could have raised the inflation rate by 6 percent.)

National wage negotiations broke down in December when Irish trade unions balked at the Coalition government's "target" of a 7 percent—later 12 percent—limit on pay increases. To counteract unemployment, the Coalition boosted funds for the Industrial Development Authority by just one-third the inflation rate and also created a Youth Employment Program to be funded anemically by a puny additional 1 percent levy. In the area of tax reform, Fitzgerald intended to reduce the basic income tax rate to 25 percent.

Unconcerned with the regressive impact of indirect taxes, the Fine Gael Minister of Finance John Bruton said, "We'll

try and redistribute the fruits of labor in the future—we're not going to take something from the people that they've already earned. I think that's fair enough." Fair enough, considering that capital taxes—in a nation where 5 percent of the population owns two-thirds of all the wealth—comprised less than 1 percent of all revenues last year. Fair enough considering that corporations contribute less than 5 percent of revenues and farmers even less while the Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) workers—wage earners whose taxes are "checked off" at the salary source—have seen their share of the tax burden rise from 60 to 90 percent of the total over the past 10 years.

Even after his government fell, Fitzgerald—brandishing the slogan "Ireland in Debt Is Ireland Unfree"—staked his campaign on the virtues of the budget that had deposed him. By far a more popular personality than Haughey, and conjuring up images of Irish life under the heel of I.M.F. stormtroopers, Fitzgerald averted total defeat by Fianna Fail, which promised to retain food subsidies, curb indirect taxes, increase social welfare benefits by 25 percent and focus on job creation while devising less painful ways of reducing the deficit. Still, Fianna Fail gained three seats for a total of 81, Fine Gael dropped two for a total of 63, and the Labour Party held steady at 15 seats in the February election.

So the Coalition, lacking six seats, and Fianna Fail, short by two (having been joined by an "Independent Fianna Fail-er"), went a-wooing the six uncommitted deputies who hiked their "prices" this time around. Tony Gregory, a Dublin community worker, demanded—and later got—a commitment to inner-city renovation and poverty programs. But the three SFWP deputies held the balance of power.

Sinn Fein, the Workers Party, is the socialist political arm of the dormant but not defunct Official I.R.A., which is fiercely opposed to the Provisional I.R.A. war in Ulster. The SFWP members demanded a "major jobs drive," return of indirect taxes to pre-coalition levels and the introduction of property and higher capital taxes.

So the SFWP opted for Haughey when Fitzgerald stood unrelentingly by his draconian budget. Haughey, however, is even less likely than Fitzgerald to soak the rich, although he no doubt agreed to the bottom-line demand for "no extra burdens on the PAYE worker and more job creation." The SFWP deputies also urge expansion of the public sector into commercial ventures, an end to the export of live cattle (more food processing at home) and of unprocessed timber and minerals. But they approve of multinational manufacturers who, after all, increase the number of industrial workers. Though evincing a hyper-orthodox brand of Marxism that owes more to Marchais and Stalin than to Berlinguer and Sartre, the SFWP may act as a revitalizing force on the Irish left while it influences and monitors Haughey's government.

Jack Kurt Jacobsen teaches politics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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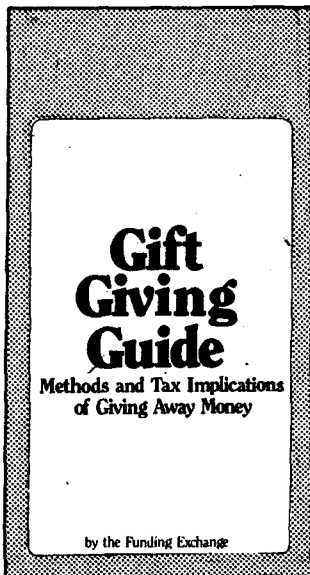
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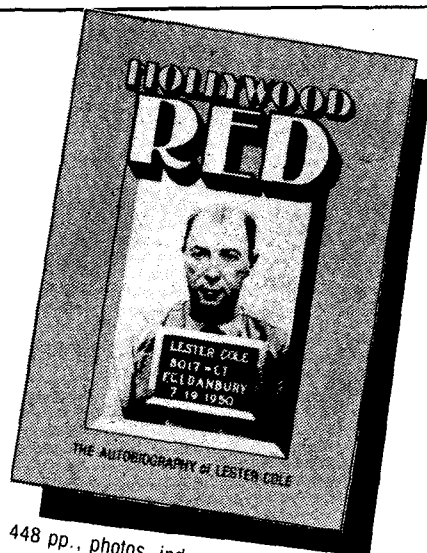
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Back on Track

Articles by
Joel Parker and Dan Biggs

SAN FRANCISCO

The Reagan administration has temporarily shelved plans to derail Amtrak's national passenger train system. Although calling for a whopping 24 percent reduction in Amtrak funding, the White House claims that its proposed \$600 million Amtrak budget would eliminate only one train. Congressional sources say that legislators may ignore the administration and grant Amtrak most of the \$788 million subsidy that Congress previously authorized. What savings the administration may achieve are likely to come at the expense of Amtrak's workforce, sources add.

Last year at this time, White House spokesmen were saying that "passenger trains have little place in a federal budget heavily in deficit." Their proposed \$613 million funding for Amtrak would have shut down the national rail system and retained train service only in the Washington-to-Boston Northeast Corridor. It took massive public outcry to convince Congress to rebuff the administration

assault, and Amtrak would up with a \$735 million appropriation for 1982 and a \$788 million authorization for 1983.

Faced with an even steeper federal deficit this year, the Office of Management and Budget unveiled plans last November to slash Amtrak's 1983 appropriation to \$480 million—a budget that would decimate the national train network. But Secretary of Transportation Drew Lewis prevailed upon the administration to up the amount to \$600 million. "The last thing Lewis wanted was a repeat of last year's debacle on Amtrak," says a DOT staffer.

Although the \$600 million proposed funding for 1983 is actually less than the amount the administration pushed last year, Amtrak officials concede that it might be enough to keep the trains rolling. "Last year we had an irreducible capital commitment, so the money left for our operating budget would have been that much less," explains an Amtrak economist. Whether the DOT budget will be enough this year, he says, depends on whether any of the DOT's proposed cutbacks will wind up coming

out of the operating budget.

DOT spokesman John Winston insists that the proposed savings are attainable. "Our intent is not to kill Amtrak, but simply to make it more productive," he says. To that end, this year's administration proposal calls for the following cuts:

- \$10 million by discontinuing the Chicago-to-Washington *Cardinal*;
- \$24 million by requiring states to pick up 100 percent of the cost of state-supported trains. Under last year's Amtrak legislation, the maximum a state would pay is 65 percent, and no state currently pays more than 50 percent;
- \$64 million to be cut from authorized capital spending, leaving a \$55 million capital budget, and;

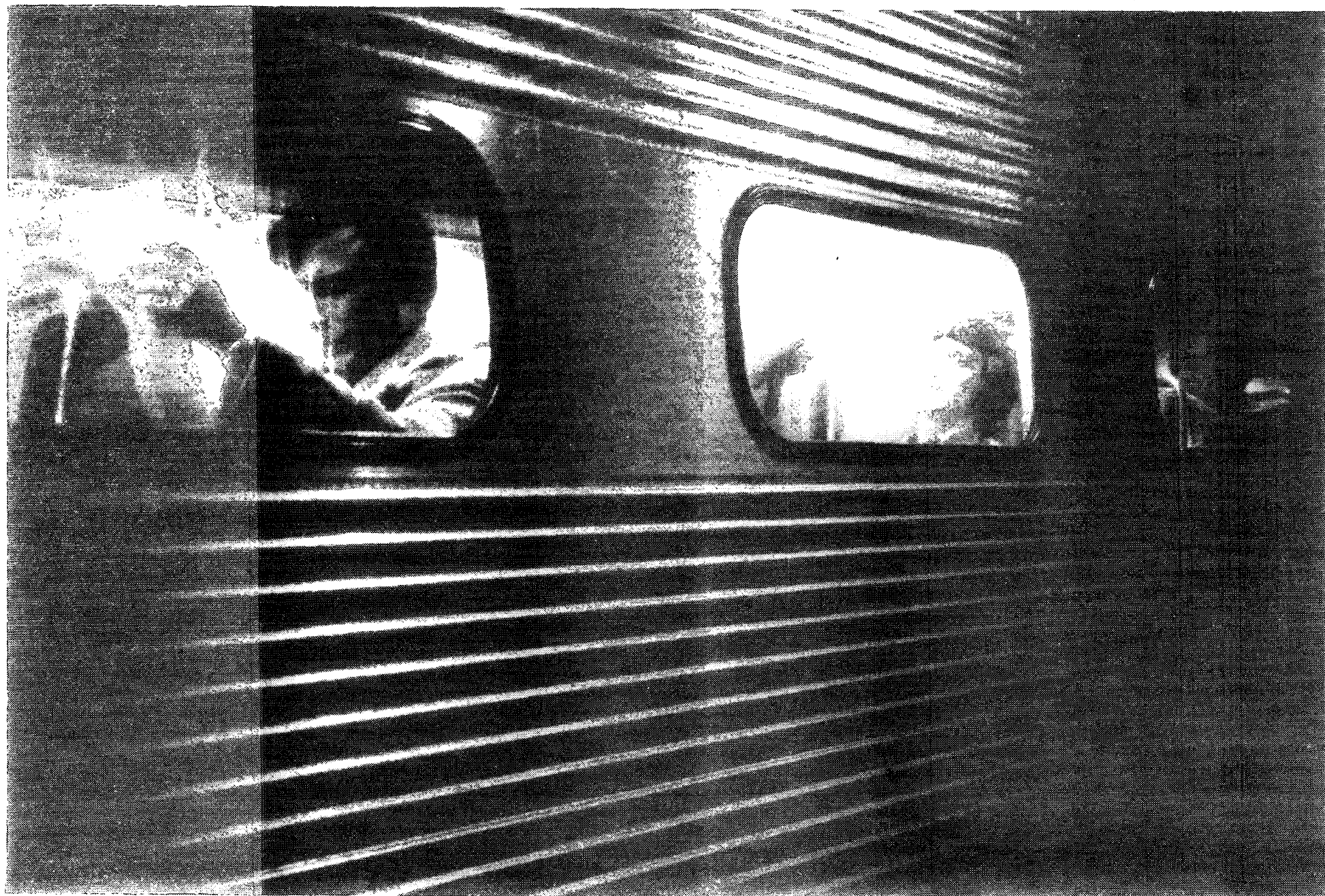
- \$75 million through "labor and management" cost reductions.

The *Cardinal's* fate will likely hinge on ridership projections submitted by Amtrak. The train was actually killed last year, but it was restored through maneuvering by members of Congress from the states that the train crosses.

A congressional source predicts that the proposed revision in state financing "does not stand a chance of being approved." Congress wants more states to share in picking up Amtrak's costs. Requiring already participating states to double their outlays would cause many to drop their existing trains, wiping out any projected savings by triggering labor protection payments. The DOT concedes that this was not taken into account in the administration proposal.

Continued on following page

Photograph: Diane Schmidt



Continued from preceding page

Reagan's plan to cut Amtrak's capital budget also faces rough sledding. Last year, Amtrak requested \$200 million to finance a laundry list of needed capital improvements for 1983. Congress authorized \$119 million. "The \$119 million was totally arbitrary," says an Amtrak government affairs specialist. "Should Congress decide to freeze our funding at last year's level (\$735 million), I guess the difference could come out of capital. But there seems to be a widespread feeling in Congress that our capital needs are real."

Of the above savings, only the capital reductions could be achieved without sparking a full-scale debate in Congress, something neither the administration nor Congress apparently wants at this time. Key Senate Committee chairmen, like Robert Packwood (R-Ore.) of Commerce and Peter Dominici (R-N.M.) of Budget, recall the storm of constituent protest that prompted them to reverse their anti-Amtrak positions a year ago.

According to one source, Dominici's staff piled pro-Amtrak letters in boxes in a back room office. "Finally they had to tell poor Peter to go in the back room and take a look," he says. "They had tons of letters. That was it; he couldn't face that kind of pressure." Amtrak's popularity cut across party and regional lines. An aide to Rep. Henry Reuss (D-Wisc.) reported that mail in support of Amtrak ran "far more and far sooner than the complaints we heard on school lunches, Medicare cuts, even Social Security."

This year the only committees scheduled to consider Amtrak's funding are



Photographs: Diane Schmidt

Rough ride Ahead

Ten years after the private railroads consigned the passenger train to the transportation graveyard, Amtrak has emerged as one of a handful of federal programs to withstand the Reagan budgetary juggernaut. Widespread popular protest in 1981 convinced Congress to thwart President Reagan's proposal to dismantle the national rail network. This year the administration itself is adopting a soft-sell approach. But the turnaround reflects a grudging concession to public pressure, not a conversion to the long-term need for rail passenger service.

Prior to Reagan's election, Amtrak estimated its 1982 and 1983 subsidy needs at nearly a billion dollars a year and hoped for additional funds to develop high-speed rail corridors in some dozen urban areas. Those plans are now on hold, as Amtrak managers consider themselves lucky to have survived. Although feelings of impending doom no longer pervade Amtrak headquarters, neither is there much elation. Faced with a barrage of government-imposed, cause-saving "reforms," many officials fear that Amtrak is headed on a downhill course of deteriorating service and reduced ridership.

The administration's sniping at Amtrak comes at a time when nearly all other industrial nations are upgrading their already superior passenger train systems. Amtrak's truncated route network, skimpy fleet and 50-mile-an-hour systemwide average contrast sharply with the expansive rail networks that blanket Japan, Europe and the Soviet Union. While foreign governments tout the energy efficiency and social advantages of passenger trains in a period of limited petroleum

supplies and highway and air congestion, the U.S. pursues its solitary course of relying on the automobile and airplane.

As a nationalized island afloat in a private sector transportation system, Amtrak has endured 11 precarious years of unremitting hostility from four administrations. The question of whether passenger trains can play a major role in meeting American energy and transportation needs has been overshadowed by a preoccupation with Amtrak's directly subsidized nature, and its competitive impact on modes of private transportation. (That private transportation industries have feasted on massive indirect government subsidies does not deter Amtrak's critics.)

But, though previous administrations regard Amtrak as only a minor annoyance, the Reagan team brings to the Amtrak debate unparalleled ideological enmity. Shortly after his election, Reagan's Transportation Advisory Task Force, dominated by highway and oil industry representatives, extolled the virtues of "the competitive forces of the private sector." As to Amtrak, they urged "quick action to reduce the taxpayer subsidy" and cautioned that "Amtrak should not be permitted to use its subsidized status to engage in 'price wars' or other unfair rate competition with private sector carriers."

Ironically, the 1981 administration attack coincided with Amtrak's best year ever. When Amtrak was created in 1971, it inherited a decrepit fleet of equipment averaging 22 years of age and a legacy of railroad animosity to the travelling public. Riding Amtrak during the '70s was an exercise in endurance—passenger cars froze in winter and broiled in summer, and delays were counted in hours and sometimes days. Chicago *Sun-Times* columnist Mike Royko joked that he rode

Amtrak regularly because "the train would not be hijacked, at least by anyone but a junk dealer."

But on-time performance hit 80 percent in 1980, a 19 percent climb over the previous year. Sleek, new equipment graced the long distance routes, and the average age of the fleet was reduced to 3.3 years. Most importantly, Amtrak reversed the historic decline of passenger train ridership. Ridership exceeded that of all but four airlines, making Amtrak the fastest growing entity in the transportation field.

Today Amtrak's hard-won gains appear in jeopardy. The uncertainties of fending off administration hostility makes corporate planning impossible. "It's like playing poker and the other guy says, 'by the way, threes are wild' in the middle of a hand," says Vice President Clark Tyler. And Reagan has succeeded in forcing Amtrak advocates to focus exclusively on ways to reduce the system's costs. The 1982 Amtrak law, laced with "insulating amendments" inserted by Amtrak congressional supporters, mandates service cutbacks and an emphasis on profitability that will damage Amtrak's performance.

By law, Amtrak must cut its \$60 million food and beverage deficit in half this year, and achieve a zero deficit in 1983. In response, Amtrak has fit its trains with pre-cooked meals in microwave ovens and served with throwaway dishes and plastic dinnerware. Dining car crews have been reduced from 11 to 4 employees. Amtrak's marketing director Bill Norman says, "The disapproval rate by passengers at first ran around 90 percent." But Amtrak will never return to traditional dining car fare, Norman says. It is preparing to reduce further its dining car service in order to meet the 100 percent cost-recovery goal by 1983.

Amtrak is also considering charging passengers for checking baggage, the closing of some small stations and eliminating checked baggage from others. Porters may be taken off coach cars, and vending machines may be installed on shorter distance trains to take the place of lounge car attendants.

An Amtrak cook recalls the the private railroads employed the same types of "reforms in the '60s as a way to drive riders off the trains. 'I've seen this before,' he recalls. 'Pretty soon the people will disappear—then the trains will disappear

because nobody's riding them."

Clark Tyler winces at the comparison. "The railroads were waking up every morning asking what we can do to annoy people so that they won't ride our trains, so that we can get out of the business," he argues. "There isn't anybody at Amtrak with that point of view. But that's not to say there isn't somebody at the Department of Transportation with that point of view."

Congress says Amtrak must recover 50 percent of its operating costs from the fare box this year, and the administration says it will ask for higher revenue-to-cost ratios in coming years. Amtrak's fares were already hiked 20 percent in each of the last two years, compared to about 8 percent a year in the '70s. According to Bill Norman, "The driving force for the corporation will now be the marketplace....If we were able to quadruple the fares, we would have no qualms about doing it."

"They're killing themselves," laments former Amtrak economist Jason Sum-



the Appropriations committees in the House and Senate, and sources say neither committee is likely to reduce Amtrak's operating or capital authorization by the amounts Reagan wants.

That leaves the \$75 million in "labor and management" reductions—a figure one Amtrak official calls a "mystery" but that labor leaders fear is the key to Reagan's strategy. Union leaders suspect that the administration proposal is simply a loaded gun that Amtrak can use to force concessions at the bargaining table.

They point out that Amtrak fired 300 administrators at its corporate headquarters during last year's go-around with Reagan and also reduced field management forces. Yet Amtrak claims the savings amounted to at most \$20 million and says management levels are now dangerously low. The \$75 million would then have to come from Amtrak's union labor force.

Even with labor costs, Amtrak's options are limited. Amtrak has already laid off hundreds of on-board service employees—its predominantly black cooks, waiters and porters. Station jobs have also been gutted, leaving Amtrak little room for further savings through job reductions. Wages and work rules are all that's left.

Many observers believe Reagan's about-face on Amtrak has more to do with his evaluation of current political forces than with a revised estimate of passenger trains' value to the nation's transportation network. Last year rail labor unions granted wage concessions

and accepted massive lay-offs temporarily to save the government-funded Conrail freight railroad, while their counterparts in the ailing auto and airline industries agreed to similar cost-saving formulas. On the other hand, Reagan's foray against Amtrak's trains met with unexpected popular opposition. The administration's 1983 budget may be a gamble that rail labor can be made to absorb the new cuts.

In the past, Amtrak has preferred to avoid labor conflict. Except for a few localized walkouts, there have been no major strikes. Amtrak always accepted the wage agreements negotiated nationally between rail labor unions and the National Carriers Conference, representing the nation's railroads. Amtrak also never bargained directly with train engine crews or with most of its skilled craft workers. Instead, those workers negotiated directly with the private railroads who operate Amtrak's trains; Amtrak in turn paid the railroads for their labor.

This year, for the first time, Amtrak refused to follow the industry-wide wage agreement, a 32.5 percent increase over 39 months. In a Christmas letter to employees, who have been without a new contract since last April, Amtrak president Alan Boyd wrote that the money "just isn't there." Thomas Fitzgibbon, an official of the Railway Clerks union, which represents most Amtrak workers, recently told members that contract talks are deadlocked, with Amtrak seeking work-rule changes such as split shifts, part-time employees, and non-consecutive rest days. Amtrak reportedly was offering an 18 percent wage hike over three

years, but that was before the administration revealed its budget proposal.

Amtrak is under even more pressure to begin negotiations to take over the railroad employees who operate Amtrak trains. At Amtrak's request, Congress changed a provision of Amtrak law last year enabling Amtrak to negotiate directly with locomotive and train crews in the Northeast Corridor where half of its trains run. Amtrak promised Congress to negotiate sweeping work-rule changes there, worth \$43 million. That would set a pattern for other crews across the country.

Amtrak is banking that rail labor will accept wage concessions as they did with Conrail last year. One labor source says that the unions will give ground in order to "buy time until 1984" when they hope to see a change in government personnel and philosophy. But there is little incentive for the unions to concede work rule changes if Amtrak cannot guarantee in exchange long-term employment stability. This is particularly true of the operating employees, since they could exercise seniority back to their home railroads where work rules remain unchanged.

Faced with this impasse, a congressional source accuses Amtrak of stalling so that the administration "can do the dirty work for them." A DOT spokesman says the administration wants Amtrak workers to accept an indefinite wage freeze as well as work rule concessions,

and that if Amtrak is unable to attain this through collective bargaining, "we'll introduce legislation within five or six months to force the necessary changes."

The irony of the pending assault on Amtrak workers is that no single group was more responsible for generating last year's public campaign to save Amtrak than its own workforce. Shortly after Reagan announced his cutback plans, Amtrak employees joined with members of the National Association of Rail Passengers (NARP) to mobilize Amtrak's 20 million riders. "From March until June, you couldn't get on an Amtrak train without getting a leaflet or petition," recalls a spokesman for Rep. James Florio (D-N.J.). Rail labor unions also rallied 20,000 workers to Washington, D.C., to protest the scheduled cuts in Amtrak and Conrail.

But labor will face its latest battle alone. NARP, bowing to political exigencies, has come out in favor of labor "sacrifices" to keep Amtrak afloat. A rift in the informal NARP-labor alliance threatens to undermine Amtrak's chances to fend off future anti-rail salvos by the Reagan administration. The lack of authorizing legislation beyond fiscal year 1983 insures that Congress will not be able to duck the Amtrak question next year. Despite this year's reprieve, the future of rail passenger service in the U.S. is as tenuous as ever. ■

Joel Parker and Dan Biggs are former presidents of the Brotherhood of Airline & Railroad Clerks in the San Francisco Bay area.

ner, who argues that ridership levels depend a great deal on travel costs in today's recession. Statistics released by Amtrak for last summer and last fall show an unexpected decline in ridership. According to Sumner, Amtrak's five-year corporate plan foresees three-quarters of its revenue gains through higher fares and only one-quarter through ridership growth.

Finally, current appropriations include too little money to rebuild or buy new equipment or to upgrade facilities. Amtrak officials squirm at the prospect of their physical assets disintegrating before their eyes. Even with the new, larger Superliner cars in the West, Amtrak's total capacity today is below the 1976 level,

and Amtrak has no spares to replace cars pulled from service for overhaul. Amtrak president Alan Boyd says that current equipment will suffice for only two or three years before beginning to break down. There is already a chronic shortage of sleeping cars on many routes, causing Amtrak to turn away potential customers.

These developing constraints on the train's service and ridership potential threaten Amtrak's most important asset—popular support. The public approval Amtrak elicited during last year's battle with Reagan is a far cry from the disdain

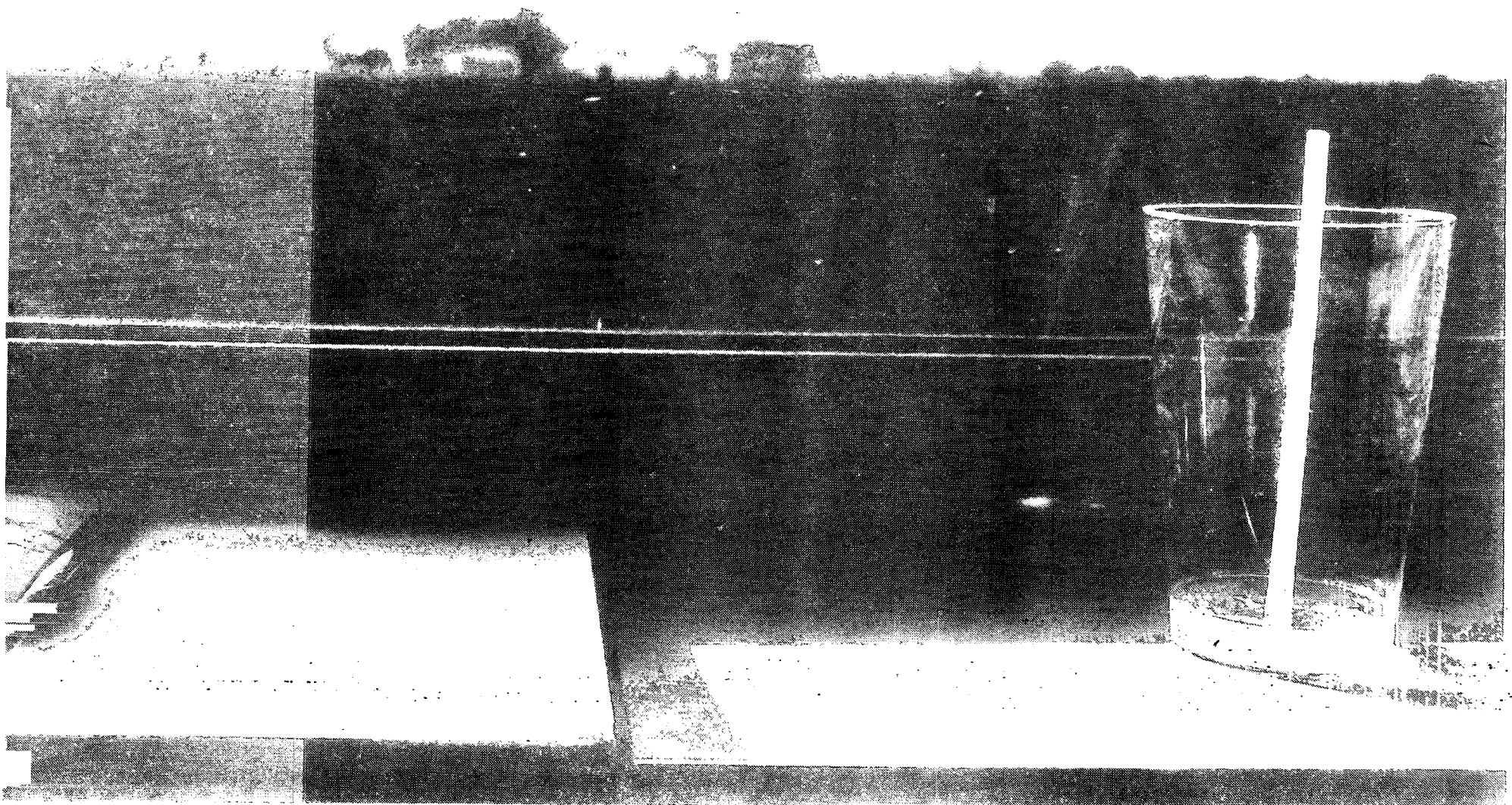
most Americans held for the private railroads' operation of the trains in the '50s and '60s. Sustaining that popular mandate may prove a tough chore in the face of the administration's ongoing war of attrition against the passenger train.

Perhaps most ominous for Amtrak's prospects is Reagan's success at setting the terms of the debate. While Amtrak proponents fight a rear-guard battle to save existing routes, the administration has deftly solicited their complicity in cutting Amtrak's costs. The dining car measures, for example, were drafted by Amtrak supporter Rep. James Florio (D-N.J.) and reluctantly endorsed by the National Association of Rail Passengers in order to pre-empt threats of more draconian cutbacks.

Yet even Amtrak critics like Len Rippa

of the National Taxpayers Union acknowledge that "quality of service, along with passenger space and comfort, is the key element in the attractiveness of trains over other modes." By making downgraded service the price for keeping the trains rolling, Reagan may have found a way to erode Amtrak's most important asset—popular support. ■

Next time: A look at Amtrak's turbulent history as the lone nationalized component of a private sector transportation system.



EDITORIAL

God, they know not what they do

There is nothing more dangerous than people in power who believe their own lies. That is why Ronald Reagan and Alexander Haig are so frightening. Twenty years ago the United States escalated its military intervention in Indochina and the American people went along because they were told that the Vietnamese were not really fighting for their independence, they were simply agents of Chinese (or Soviet) imperialism. It took 10 years of carnage and destruction in Vietnam—and the death of more than 50,000 American soldiers—to teach a substantial majority of Americans that our support of the puppet regime was not appreciated by the people of Vietnam—that it was neither in their interest or our own.

Ronald Reagan has never stopped believing that the Vietnamese were simply the mindless pawns of a global Communist conspiracy run from Moscow (or was it Beijing?). And Alexander Haig is still at it. Only 10 days ago he let it slip that for him the “global” aspect of the “El Salvador problem” is a fact of “theological and practical reality.” And what is the major tenet of this administration’s religion? That the Soviet Union is “where the Communist radical net is run from, without which the insurgents themselves could not exist.”

Haig’s religion tells him that insurrection in Latin America has its source in the Kremlin.

Unfortunately for Reagan and Haig, not many Americans share this faith, and an overwhelming majority no longer want to commit American resources, and possibly lives, to save despotic regimes that cannot defend themselves against the anger and hatred of their own people. Desperate to prove that many devils really do dance in the heads of Salvadoran guerrillas, Haig has been reduced to grasping at straws—and to swallowing a lot of water. First, on March 4, Haig gleefully announced that “today for the first time a Nicaragua military man was captured in Salvador, having been sent down by the F.S.L.N. to participate in the direction, which is so evident, of this guerrilla operation from Nicaragua.” Then, as we all know, Little Satan escaped to the Mexican embassy and the Mexicans reported that in real life he was a student in Mexico who was on his way home to Nicaragua for vacation when he was arrested. Next a real Nicaraguan guerrilla, captured and persuaded by the Salvadoran army to tell all, was presented to the press in Washington. But this “liar,” as honest Ronnie later called him, said that the Salvadoran “persuasion” violated civilized behavior, and that he had agreed to say he was trained and sent by the Cubans and Nicaraguans only to save his life. He had joined the guerrillas on his own and he had seen no Cubans or other Nicaraguans fighting in El Salvador, he said.

All of this was a little too much for a Congress already under heavy popular pressure not to repeat the experience of Vietnam. Saying they were alarmed by recent reports that the administration was financing covert operations in Nicaragua, Senators Paul E. Tsongas



(D-Mass.) and Christopher J. Dodd (D-Conn.) proposed legislation on March 12 to require prior congressional approval for military action and covert intelligence operations in Central America. Conceding that there is a connection between the Soviet Union and Nicaragua, Dodd argues that instead of pursuing a policy of military intervention the U.S. should “offer a better deal” through aid and cooperation with the Sandinistas. “Rather than destabilize the government, why not try to build a relationship there?” Dodd asked. These senators’ action, on top of a letter signed by 100 members of Congress nine days ear-

lier urging Haig seriously to consider Mexican President Jose Lopez Portillo’s initiative in seeking negotiations between the U.S. and Nicaragua and El Salvador, finally forced the Secretary of State to seek a way of backing down. The first step in this process has been a reversal of Haig’s March 4 dismissal of Lopez Portillo’s suggestion that talks be held between the Nicaraguans and the U.S. The weekend before last he met for the first apparently serious talks seeking de-escalation of administration threats and covert actions.

But there is still no hint that Haig or Reagan understand that their actions cre-

ate exactly the kind of situation about which they complain, and that this has been true of American foreign policy since the end of World War II. In Vietnam in 1954 Ho Chi Minh, according to all the most reliable reports, attempted to set up a government with full civil liberties and political democracy. American hostility and intervention drove the Vietnamese into increasing dependence on the Chinese and Russians, but it became clear after their final victory in 1974 that this was no natural alliance. The Cuban case was even more clear-cut. Opposed by the Cuban Communist party in his guerrilla campaign against the Batista regime until shortly before victory, Fidel Castro had little love and less respect for the Communists. In early 1959 he sought friendly relations and aid from the United States but was widely rebuffed when it became clear that he intended to nationalize American property in Cuba and to carry through the reforms he had promised. The American embargo on Cuba drove it into the Soviet orbit and into an almost total dependence on the Soviet Union, creating the situation that Haig now deplores and is replicating in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

In every one of these cases, contrary to Haig’s theology, the revolutionary movement was neither inspired nor run by an international “Communist radical net.” The insurgents existed without it, just as Solidarity in Poland existed without the CIA’s inspiration or direction. Their inspiration was the oppression of oligarchical regimes subservient to the interests of corporate America.

The loyalty of the Reagan administration, as that of previous administrations, to these despotic regimes has been against the true national interests not only of the people of Vietnam, Cuba, Nicaragua and El Salvador, but also that of the American people. This is just one more way, less obvious to many but equally true, in which the Reagan administration’s loyalty to the God of Mammon is greater than its loyalty to the nation.

Citizens Party shows how it should be done

In 1980 we welcomed the formation of the Citizens Party and Barry Commoner’s campaign for president because of the way in which he was attempting to make the issue of social control of investment a part of the American political dialogue. But we had little faith that a new party, especially one organized so late, with little or no support from the labor movement and with precious few experienced politicians, could make a credible showing. After the election, in which Commoner received only 280,000 votes, we thought we had probably seen the last of the Citizens Party.

But a small band of die-hards kept a semblance of national organization in place, and in a few localities Citizens Party people dug in and started to build local organizations. The first real fruit of that process, as we reported two weeks ago, ripened in Burlington, Vt., where on March 2 the new party elected two new aldermen, bringing their total to three on a board of 13, elected two others to minor posts and got into a runoff for yet another aldermanic seat. In all, the Citizens Party in Burlington

was able to run in 26 contests in the city, which indicates a high degree of organization.

We have always argued that socialist participation in the electoral process was essential, regardless of the form it takes. The principle for us is the discussion of social goals and social control of investment in a comprehensible and practical way. This might be done through the Democratic party, as the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee advocates, or it might be done by independents in non-partisan elections, as has been done in Santa Cruz, Calif., or, as the Citizens Party has demonstrated, it can be done, at least in some localities, through a third party.

In fact, it seems painfully clear, that while independents and Citizens Party people are doing just this, precious little has actually been done by DSOC in the Democratic party. We think conditions are ripe for socialists to enter Democratic primaries for a wide range of legislative offices this year and in 1984. The building of a socialist presence in that party requires such action soon.

LETTERS

IN THESE TIMES is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

A NEW LEFT

I HAVE BEEN READING YOUR NEWS-
paper fairly consistently for a year. I find it to be high-quality. It is packed with information—"hard" news, much of which the mass media, because of its "centrist" bias, chooses to ignore.

Your independent, non-sectarian viewpoint and the information you supply is crucial in helping to build a united democratic left. I applaud you for the contribution you are making in the development of a left alternative—a basis for action. I wish you continued success in your important work.

—Gary S. North
Campbell, Calif.

SCYLLA & CHARYBDIS

THE EXCHANGE CONCERNING MOD-
ernism between Morris Dickstein and Jackson Lears (*ITT*, Feb. 17, 24) raises a question of vital importance for the left: Has the development of American society in the 20th century facilitated or obstructed its socialist transformation? Does a seemingly relentless modernization undermine capitalist hegemony, opening up new avenues of liberation or does the process contradict freedom, leaving only administration and consumption as modes of human expression? If the latter is true, continued faith by the left in material progress and social engineering may force it (like its bourgeois counterparts) down the path toward decadence and authoritarianism. On the other hand, if the left rejects modernism, it may be forced back into utopian programs or into an alliance with conservatism.

It is easy to mock President Reagan's naive faith that the problems of capitalism come from an excess of food stamps or that the threat to American hegemony comes from Libyan "hit squads." His ignorance does not imply our knowledge. We too are riding the tiger's back.

—Jules R. Benjamin
Rochester, N.Y.

SYMPTOMATIC

READING JOHN JUDIS' "WHY DEF-
icits Now Cause Recessions," (*ITT*, Feb. 17), I experienced an incredible sense of déjà vu—as if I'd heard it all before in a *Wall Street Journal* editorial!

Even a cursory glance at data for the last 12 years suggests that deficits are a by-product and not a source of recession. As a proportion of GNP our largest deficits occurred in and immediately after the troughs of recession.

Nor can inflation be blamed on deficit spending. Measured as a proportion of GNP budget deficits in Japan have consistently been higher than in the U.S., yet rates of inflation (and unemployment) have been much lower there than here.

The greater frequency and intensity of recessions in the last eight years is essentially an epiphenomenon of the deepening stagnation of U.S. capitalism. That stagnation in turn is rooted in a failure of corporate capital to engage in the long-term capital investment and technological innovation necessary to keep American goods competitive on world markets. Although gross investment ratios throughout the period 1974-1980 have been as high as ever, an extraordinarily high propor-

tion of this investment has been short-term patch-up stuff. This is shown by the decline in the growth rate of capital-to-labor ratios from 3.3 percent per year during the period 1959-74, to a miserable 0.2 percent per year during the period 1974-79.

The source of our present problems is a failure of corporate vision and planning—a failure that has become so massive that deficit spending no longer can maintain full employment or high aggregate growth. But let us not mistake the symptom (budget deficits) for the cause of our malaise.

—Michael J. Carter
Assistant Professor of Economics,
University of Massachusetts, Amherst

SHELL GAME

SECRETARY OF STATE ALEXANDER
Haig claims that the El Salvador people's struggle against the U.S.-supported dictatorship in that country is being directed from Nicaragua.

As one charge after another from Haig is found to be false, distorted, invented or unsubstantiated, the ordinary citizen cannot help but wonder whether anything General Haig, or indeed the Reagan administration, ever says about foreign affairs is true. Here General Haig insists that the "evidence" for Nicaragua's subversion of El Salvador is "overwhelming and irrefutable." But he gives none. Last week, he referred to the "very, very impressive photographs" of alleged Nicaraguan atrocities against the Miskito Indians. But within one week, these photographs have been found to be a hoax. Now he is claiming the people's fight against El Salvador's death-squad junta is a matter of foreign interference. Yet even the U.S.'s own ex-ambassador to El Salvador, Robert White, has admitted that more than 80 percent of the population supports the revolution.

A year ago, Haig was saying that the El Salvador popular uprising was "a textbook case of indirect armed aggression by communist states outside Central America."

There is a pattern to all this. The present U.S. administration increasingly ships millions of dollars worth of arms and military advisors into third world countries to support its claim, blames other nations for "interfering" when the people of these countries rise up against their oppressors. Haig is an old hand at this game. But his credibility is wearing thin. Senator Nino Pasti of Italy had this to say about him after his [Pasti's] stint as Deputy Supreme Commander of NATO for nuclear affairs: "I had a difficult job to discover one truth told by General Haig."

—J. Christoff
Toronto

NO PANACEA

MORE AND MORE FREQUENTLY I AM
hearing of the great powers of pension funds to alleviate the misery of the working class, particularly here in the Frostbelt (Chuck Fager, *ITT*, Feb. 10). While I agree that control over these funds can provide benefits to the labor movement (e.g., not investing in non-union companies, or in countries such as South Africa), the view that they can resolve the problem of unemployment, much less lead to socialism, goes against my grain.

Massive rebuilding of the industrial foundation and economic infrastructure is necessary to pull the U.S. out of

its economic doldrums. The fundamental responsibility for the decline in economic vitality of the U.S. lies with the system of private ownership of the means of production—investment decisions based on short-term profit requirements, not on overall social considerations. The current fad for pension funds implies that piecemeal re-direction of social capital within this same framework of private investment can solve the problem.

Nonsense. The overall planned investment of the social product necessary to revitalize the economy cannot be done by throwing money at capitalism and hoping it transforms itself into socialism. It requires a national political transformation to wrest control of these investment decisions from the blind dictates of capital. (Like it or not, even the ever popular "worker controlled" companies and investment entities are still subject to the laws of a capitalist market without such a political change.)

The different reindustrialization schemes now being debated, from Rohatyn to Kirkland, are simply ways to direct more of the collective wealth of the working class (be it through taxes or pension funds) to prop up a system of corporate ownership that has repeatedly proven its inability to maintain a healthy society. Is this what socialists should be fighting for?

—Glen Janken
Detroit

LEFTWARD, HA!

DAVID MOBERG'S REPORTS (*ITT*,
March 10) that the AFL-CIO Executive Councils appointment of a committee to investigate the possibility of supporting certain cuts in the defense budget represents a break in the previously monolithic stand of the AFL-CIO in support of militarism and U.S. imperialist aggression. I only wish it were so.

Moberg's article is one of many that portray the AFL-CIO as moving leftward in response to the Reagan administration's attacks on the labor movement and their gearing up for war. The view that since Solidarity Day the AFL-CIO has once again become the champion of social justice and world peace is being expressed by many left forces in the labor movement. (The CPUSA elaborates this view fully in the most recent issue of *Political Affairs*.) But I would suggest that the actions of the AFL-CIO representatives on the Democratic National Committee in reducing the representation of women and minorities and the failure to defend master agreements and the existing wage scales by several large unions would force us to question this view.

On the question of AFL-CIO support for American militarism and foreign policy I think the issue is even clearer. The position of the AFL-CIO stems from their fundamental view that the prosperity of American workers depends on the prosperity of capital. American imperialist aggression around the world is an expression of the demand for markets for the export of goods and capital and for sources of cheap labor and raw materials. It has been supported by the AFL for 100 years. Since the Bolshevik Revolution anti-communism has been added to the justification for support of American imperialism and today anti-communism is the main justification of AFL-CIO support of military build-up and for U.S. involvement in El Salvador.

In 1980 90 percent of the \$20 million combined budget of the AFL-CIO's international training institutes came from the Agency for International Development of the Department of State. This money was used to train trade unionists who are loyal supporters of the governments of the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Israel, Guatemala, El Salvador and others. All reactionary governments which suppress the democratic rights of their people.

In the '60s Lyndon Johnson was able to finance the military build-up for Vietnam and the Great Society social

programs by increasing the debt and allowing inflation to soar. The AFL-CIO was not forced to choose between its support of aggression in Vietnam and programs of social insurance for working people. Ronald Reagan is allowing no such leeway today. The AFL-CIO is forced to look for cuts in the defense budget in the congressional battle over the budget. But this does not constitute any fundamental change, or even a marked shift from Federation policy on war and the military build-up.

In a Personal Views column in the March 4 issue of the *Chicago Sun-Times*, Federation President Lane Kirkland expresses his view on the source of the confusion in Reagan foreign policy. Reagan has allowed himself to be swayed by business interests who want to make a profit from detente by selling goods to the Soviet Union and Eastern bloc countries. Kirkland postures that he is against business and for America. In reality Kirkland only adds support to that section of business; oil, minerals, high-technology and armaments manufacturing, that sees the road to economic recovery being paved by the U.S. army across Central American, or the Middle East or Europe.

The Executive Council's decision to investigate the possibility of cuts in the defense budget is no challenge to or drift from that position.

—Matthew J. Fusco
Trade Union Action League, Chicago

David Moberg replies: I doubt that anyone was too wildly misled by the highly qualified optimism in my article. But the new conditions in which the labor movement finds itself present possibilities for change despite the wishes of many of those involved. For some of the limitations, see page 3 of this issue. The American labor movement has generally supported American business interests overseas, but its policies have other roots that can bring it into conflict as well. Besides, since even different business sectors come into conflict, it's not surprising that labor at times supports policies that help one industry at the expense of another. But if Kirkland's policies on Poland are designed to bolster armaments manufacturers (the high technology people would be surprised by Fusco's analysis since Kirkland wants to cut off the Eastern European market for them), then a decision to consider cuts in the military budget seems to conflict with that desire.

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PERSPECTIVES

Individualism and liberty

By Richard Lichtman

MARX BELIEVED THAT the technological achievements of capitalism were a necessary prerequisite for socialism. But he did not sufficiently realize that the moral and social corruption of capitalism would itself infect and undermine the socialist vision. He did struggle against various socialist counterfeits and the practical reformers whose incremental advances spelled their cumulative defeat. But he failed to credit the flawed dialectic of capitalism, which takes away with the spiritual hand what it offers with the material.

In James Livingston's remarks on Robert Heilbroner's "Marxism: For and Against," (*In These Times*, April 1, 1981) the issue is sharply and vigorously posed. Livingston took Heilbroner to task for maintaining that "It seems to me as unlikely that a socialist civilization will be fundamentally interested in what we call liberty as that a bourgeois civilization will be fundamentally interested in what its predecessors called piety." Livingston argues for the validity of the liberal ideal, maintaining that "We cannot simply invest a 'new' concept of liberty that ignores the presumptions and explanatory power of older concepts. To do so would be to repress and mutilate, not comprehend and give coherence to, the historically determined capacities and consciousness of the human species." We need, Livingston argues, to appre-

ciate the vision of the early American revolutionaries whose definition of liberty was not limited to the freedom of contract in the marketplace, but also included "the people's use of public power for the sake of public happiness." They argued that individuals "could not fully develop their human capacities, unless they shared in, and helped shape, the life of the community."

These seemingly antagonistic positions share a common presupposition—the identification of liberty and individuality with its bourgeois embodiment. Heilbroner begins by correctly noting Marx's interest in "individuation" and cites his contention that in communist society "subjective human sensibility" could be most usefully developed. He is sensitive to Marx's critique of the bourgeois conception of the individual as an isolated atom who exists prior to the "ensemble of social relations." The main strength of Heilbroner's account is his recognition of the new element in Marx's conception of socialist freedom: "the enhancement of the social consciousness of its citizens...an awareness of each person's obligations toward the collectivity of others..." Livingston does not appreciate Heilbroner's recognition that "the freedoms associated with a socialism that is 'beyond' capitalism will be of a different kind than our own. Indeed, how could that not be the case if socialism is to be a radically new setting for mankind?"

But Heilbroner betrays his insight into Marx's concern with individuation when he claims that Marx "implies a lower estimation of individuation than we find in bourgeois society." Individual difference

under socialism becomes a "challenge to the primacy of the collectivity," whose concern is ostensibly with the union and identity of its members, rather than their "individual personal achievement." Marx, however, is not concerned to defend the "collectivity" against the individual. His concern is precisely the relationship between individual realization and the socialist community. Individual self-fulfillment is possible for Marx only through shared, cooperative nurturance. Heilbroner mistakenly opposes individuality and society, and is, therefore, driven to portray socialism as the elimination of individual.

Livingston, on the other hand, is respectful of what is valid in the revolutionary bourgeois ideal, and regards the achievement of protected civil liberties as the "necessary but not sufficient conditions of human freedom." His strength is the converse of Heilbroner's, as is his weakness. Thus we do not glean from his account the distinction between the necessary and sufficient conditions of socialist freedom. Livingston points out the continuity between bourgeois and socialist ideals; but is silent on the socialist vision, its resolution of the bourgeois antagonism between collectivity and individual liberties. True, we cannot "invent" a new concept of liberty. But we can articulate the germinating vision of socialism, of which we are already dimly aware. Socialism is not simply a matter of giving coherence to "historically determined capacities" of capitalism as Livingston maintains. The bourgeois ideal of freedom is grossly deficient. Our knowledge of its inadequacy is the starting point for its transcendence.

First, the liberal ideal cannot be realized under capitalism. Capitalism's principles are systematically forced to betray themselves. Under the hand of capitalist power each of its ideals is revealed as its opposite—liberty as domination, equality as class exploitation and fraternity as the fratricidal war of each against all.

But the liberal idea is inadequate at a deeper level. Even were it attainable it would prove deficient. For it speaks to a freedom that is basically negative—the freedom from constraint, from domination, from external imposition of all kinds. And while this negation is a valid moment in a fuller development of freedom, it cannot sustain itself in its own terms. It is an ideal of forced and temporary neutrality in a perennial combat of antagonists. Its latent meaning is a structure of aggressive and dehumanizing social relations in which individuals are forced into themselves to guard against the menace of others. Its public realm is a code for combatants, and its protected liberties are largely the rules by which the powerful have agreed to manage the affairs of state.

Socialism embraces the need for freedom of speech and silence, of assembly and solitude, of differentiation and individual dignity. But socialism incorporates the rights of autonomous and self-determining individuals into a community of cooperative equals. The notion of such transcendence, however, is being lost to the socialist community, which more and more succumbs to the bourgeois ideal, not as a negative moment, but as a vision to be made "coherent" and reasonable. Socialism is not only the "fulfillment" of capitalism, it is also a movement beyond capitalist individualism toward a life of communal self-fulfillment, in which ideals of dignity are realized not in combat with others, but through reciprocal recognition and love.

At this point, bourgeois individualism rises up in self-righteous indignation, inflamed by the notion of a common human purpose. Is not this notion the very denial of individualism as we understand

it? Does it not demand the destruction of individual rights, grinding individuality under the tyrannical boot of the state? Isn't the "common will" the facade of fascism, the barbarism of collective domination. The answer is no. We are not faced with a choice between the empty isolation of bourgeois atomism and the collective massification of state socialism. Capitalism first produced mass society, either in the form of fascist violence or consumer standardization. Genuine individuality vanishes in a capitalist society. Liberalism's exaggerated insistence on difference, distinctness, isolation and bounded independence is only ideological compensation for the terrible but anonymous dependence to which each of us is exposed. Abstract uniqueness is not at issue, but the value of what one prizes as unique. The manufactured "differentiation" of the cultural industry is the counterfeit of uniqueness, a house of mirrors, of hollowed out individuals who are empty vessels to be filled with the latest intellectual and social commodities. In our time we produce differentiation without a meaningful difference.

The most incisive criticism of the bourgeois ideal of individualism was written not by a Marxist, but by the most penetrating of the bourgeois social critics:

"No one knows who will live in this cage in the future...mechanized petrification, embellished with a sort of convulsive self-importance. For at the last stage of this cultural development, it might be truly said: 'Specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved'."

Max Weber wrote this in 1919, and it remains one of the great prophetic passages in Western literature.

Community does not end individual life or difference. If we are serious about socialism, we must be serious about the uniqueness of the life we intend to create, and of the freedom that will distinguish it. Individuals can differentiate themselves through power, status, domination and possession, or through love, concern, creativity and engagement. Differences do not have to be malignant to be real. A socialist community should unalterably be opposed to the homogenization of its members. Socialism is justified by the plenitude, abundance and exuberance of its potential social forms. Certainly its members will lead varied lives, disagree as to truth and goodness, find themselves on occasion with the minority against the majority, treasure their relation with lovers, friends and associates, prize their solitude.

But it is really not possible to imagine a "marketplace of ideas" in a socialist society. This phrase, which so well captures the egoistic reduction of public discourses to the profit motive of capitalism, is not the dream of socialist inquiry and exchange.

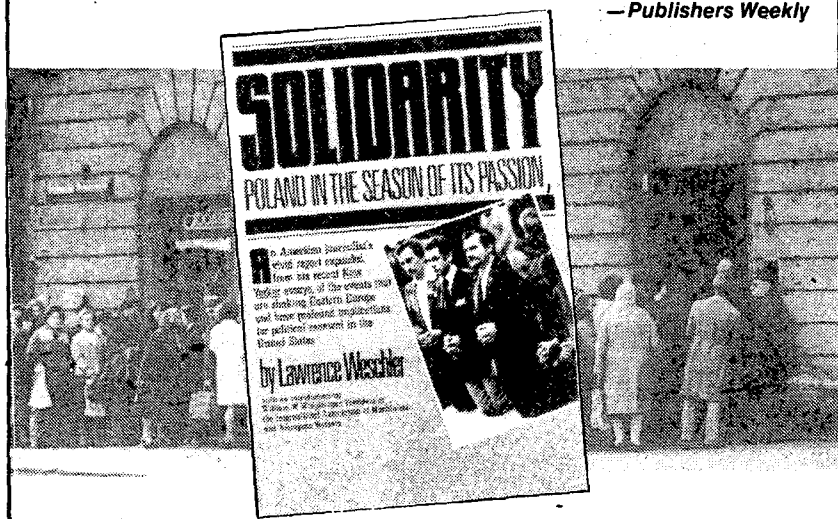
The abstract power to disagree is not at issue, but the use to which this power is put. The cynical relativism that marks the public realm of capitalist society has so contracted our imagination that we find it difficult to conceive of another mode of public speech. And, in fact, a mode appropriate to a socialist community does not yet exist. But we can glimpse the adumbrated forms of such a discourse in history—in the Socratic dialogues, and the discussion of the Greek polis, in Quaker "consensus" and the town meetings of early New England, in soviets of laborer and workers councils—in all those instances where men and women have been moved by some passion for the common good and have dedicated themselves to articulating that vision through mutual exploration and dialogue.

Socialism cannot compete within the logic of capitalism. It cannot claim followers except by presenting an alternative vision grand enough to elicit from the people of this country the promise of a better life. In the current crisis conservatism is the expression of terror in the face of dissolution; liberalism the plaintive cry to return to the source of that dissolution. There is no movement beyond the present morass but socialism, and no hope for socialism that disavows the power of its own promise.

Richard Lichtman teaches at the Wright Institute in Berkeley, Calif.

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PERSPECTIVES

In South Africa, the right splinters but apartheid stays

By James North

JOHANNESBURG

MUCH NONSENSE WILL surely be spread about in the West following the recent split in the ruling National Party here.

The supporters of "constructive engagement" who advocate continued foreign investment will try to cite the hiving off of 15 Nationalist MPs as evidence that the apartheid regime has divested itself of its right wing and is now about to embark on an earnest program of reform.

That interpretation of the split is highly misleading. The overall apartheid system is not in dispute within the National Party. The two factions are quarrelling over peripheral features. The "reformists" want to adjust apartheid to keep pace with economic changes, and to increase the chances for internal stability. The break-away group insists any changes are, in an oft-repeated expression, "the thin edge of the wedge" that will eventually destroy the entire edifice.

Prime Minister P.W. Botha, whose triumphant majority retains control of 127 of 177 seats in the all-white Parliament, is still totally dedicated to maintaining "grand apartheid"—of which the Bantustan system is the central institution used to exploit the black majority and to keep it politically powerless.

But Botha has long hinted he is willing to make certain adjustments designed to win over segments of the so-called "colored," Indian and to a lesser extent urban black communities. His main objective is obvious: to increase his base of support as the armed conflict intensifies. But the regime also hopes the "reforms" will boost black working class productivity, presently low, to make South African exports competitive in regional and even world markets.

The 15 rebel MPs have a more ideolog-

ically coherent view of apartheid. They—and their counterparts in the far-right Herstigte (Reconstructed) National Party (HNP), with whom they may ally—apparently still regard apartheid with near-theological reverence, honestly believing it is in the best interests of all the nation's "population groups." They believe Botha is opportunistically tamper-

South African Prime Minister P.W. Botha is loosening up around the margins, but his basic commitment to "grand apartheid" is unchanged.



Marie Caputo

ing with a system that was years in the making. At the same time, they represent sections of the white community most threatened by any black advancement, such as workers or lower-level employees in the swollen state bureaucracy.

The split took place over what was in practical terms a relatively trivial issue. The prime minister endorsed what he termed "power-sharing" with Indians and "coloreds" (but not with blacks, even those who live permanently in urban areas, who are supposed to exercise political rights in "their" respective Bantustans).

Even though whites outnumber the other two groups combined, Botha's proposal does not mean one man, one vote for them. It is rather an effort to produce some tortuous formula that will allow minimal "colored" and Indian participation in the national government. Even moderate leaders from the two communities have already rejected any such con-

stitutional change that does not include blacks.

Nonetheless, the Nationalist rebels pointed out, quite accurately, that Botha's ideas are a change in party policy. When the Nats came to power in 1948, a small segment of "colored" people were registered to vote in the Cape province. The regime spent the next two decades in an ultimately successful legal/political battle to correct this defect in the structure of pure "separate development."

Botha moved skillfully to isolate the rebel chief, Dr. Andries Treurnicht, who headed the National Party in the Transvaal, the most populous of South Africa's four provinces. The shallowness of support for Treurnicht, dubbed "Dr. No" by hostile newspapers, was surprising; pundits had forecasted that 30 to 35 MPs would follow him.

But Botha's worries are not over. Other Nat MPs are waiting for the precise form of his proposals before deciding whether to bolt. The gleeful HNP remains strong. To counter the newly enlarged far right, Botha is said to be considering the "De Gaulle (or Mussolini) Option," in which he would stage some sort of coup with help from the military and effect his adjustments totally by fiat.

He can also count on picking up some support to his "left," particularly in the English-speaking business community. The Progressive Federal Party, which with 27 seats constitutes the official parliamentary opposition, has promised to back him if he opts for what it decides are genuine reforms.

Though the split in Nationalism will mean on balance no improvement in the lives of black South Africans, it is nonetheless a welcome development at this stage. Any weakening of the unity behind the regime improves the prospects for the anti-apartheid forces.

But the degree of division should not be overstated. In terms of maintaining the murderous security apparatus, for instance, there is little or no disagreement. The far right is not calling Botha "soft on terrorism." The latest victim of the security police, black trade union leader Thozamile Gqweta, has been released and sent back to his home in the port city of East London. Friends there say he is "not well," and it will be a while before he recovers from whatever tortures he suffered in detention.

Simultaneously, the police picked up three more union activists. To them—and to the close to 200 other people still detained without trial—the split in Nationalism is almost meaningless.

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INPRINT

AMERICAN HISTORY

Memories of a lifelong red

Steve Nelson, *American Radical*
By Steve Nelson, James R.
Barrett, Rob Ruck
University of Pittsburgh Press,
454 pp., \$19.95

By Lester Rodney

Nelson may come as close as a narrative autobiography can to satisfying the curiosity of a new generation of scholars about American reds and their role in the tumultuous years from World War I through the '50s. Not to mention the nagging puzzles: How could you otherwise smart people not *know* that Russia wasn't what you cracked it up to be? What kept you *in* after the Nazi pact, and after Browder was kicked out on word from abroad? And, question of questions, how could so many men and women be so courageous, so selfless, so well-read, so resourceful—and so stupid?

One reason Nelson succeeds better than others is that—Steve won't mind this because he cheerfully admits it—he was not a specially gifted speaker, writer or theoretician, even though he was co-opted via Comrade Murphy's Law into two miscast years on the sacrosanct National Board in New York. The strengths of the teenage Yugoslav miller who arrived here in 1920 were mental and physical toughness, honesty and an unmistakable empathy for capitalism's victims. This attribute in an organization where soaring words often elbowed humanity to the rear helped make him a better than average party organizer and troubleshooter in the plants of Detroit and Chicago, Pennsylvania's anthracite region and the soft coal fields of Illinois.

In homely chronological detail, we follow him building action councils from town to town, explaining to baffled, prideful

men that unemployment insurance was not something shameful and alien but their due, and leading an impressive hunger march to the Pennsylvania capitol in 1933. It was the American Communist Party at its best, undoubtedly playing a large role in preparing the ground for the organizing of the CIO. Nelson had a look at the first land of socialism when he was sent to Moscow's Lenin School, which he helps to de-mythify with his straightforward description. He was savagely beaten by Red Squad police goons in Chicago. While leading the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, he was wounded in Spain. In his 50s, he was singled out for special brutal treatment in a Pennsylvania prison where he served time under an antiquated (and later overturned) state sedition law.

When a man with such a background finally calls his party into question, the dramatic impact is considerable.

party individually at earlier junctures and were cast into the outer darkness).

With a wife and two children and no bank account at a rather late stage of life, like many other "full timers" Nelson had a desperate scramble to "make a living" after leaving the womb. But at 80, with his wife and comrade of many years, Margaret, enjoying a home he built himself on Cape Cod, Nelson has a revitalized socialist vision, this time with checks-and-balances democracy.

The two University of Pittsburgh graduate students who worked with Nelson on this book, via oral history techniques, did not tamper with his pedestrian narrative style. Not even when Steve occasionally lapses into what we comrades ruefully called "ba-goo," such as, "In the '30s, we tried to sink roots and stimulate action on the immediate issues confronting the American people," and "The real key, I believe, was a greater flexibility in our mass work that was inseparable from the vital question of recruitment." That too was the party. (Wouldn't Alexander Haig have made some outstanding contributions to ba-goo if he had been a Communist?)

At the heart of this book is the

Nelson left the Communist Party in 1957, saying, "I can't even ask my own kids to join."

Nelson left in 1957, part of a large disheartened exodus convinced the party could not change. He arose at a National Board meeting, said, "There's no hope for this party. I can't even ask my own kids to join a party that holds these views. How can I ask anyone else?" and left. (Difficult as the decision was, it was far easier for our Class of '57, leaving with a certain self-righteousness and air of inevitability, with lots of peer support, than for the agonized, little-known heroes and heroines who challenged the

close-up sense of people in working class locales, generosity and camaraderie unleashed by common action. We also glimpse some of the contradictions that still confound doctrinaires in this complex land. A local legislator, a business man, and a minister, light years from Communists but believing in the good words embedded in our Constitution, help Nelson during the "Free Speech" fight to end the routine jailing of organizers. Scholarly and objective notes, taking no prior knowledge for granted, amount to a mini-education in labor and radical history.

Nelson touches on many conflicts on party "line." For instance, the tug-of-war over the content of shop newspapers—how much space do you give to the Soviet Union, the country of socialism? Those pressing for space for Soviet accomplishments, Nelson wryly notes, tended to be office people. We on the *Daily Worker* had something of the same problem. Loud were the journalistic groans at ponderous articles on Ukrainian production. ("Who the hell would read that?") I recall the *reductio ad absurdum* of this syndrome in a Brooklyn high school in the late '20s, long before I was aware of "politics." Young Communists in the school admirably led resistance to raising the price of milk in the cafeteria. Headline of their leaflet: "For 5-cent Milk and Defend the Soviet Union."

Nelson knew—and at the time, not in self-serving retrospect—that you won people not by talking about the Soviet Union or a Soviet America but about wages, unions, civil rights, unemployment compensation, old age security. Yet he insists that Communists never forsook the task of socialist education. The word might not appear on the agenda of council meetings, but there was literature on socialism for the curious. A comrade would say something like, "You probably know that many of us are Communists. The capitalist press has made the word taboo, but let me tell you what it really means." Recruits attended basic theory classes in all periods. No, lack of socialist education was hardly what undercut the CP's valiant efforts. Look rather to zombie-like refusal to utter word one in criticism of Big Daddy USSR, devastating shifts in policy unrelated to American problems and suicidal pushing of irrelevant "lines" such as opposition to the Marshall Plan in trade unions.

Nelson flatly pooh-poohs what has become folk wisdom, that America in the '30s was on the verge of revolution (saved for capitalism by FDR's reforms). "The Communists of the '30s didn't plan for a revolution be-

cause there was no possibility of one," he holds, "not because they were lulled to sleep by New Deal reform. We concentrated on building a mass movement that might one day accomplish it."

There are some humorous touches missing in the memoirs of other "exes." He confesses sheepishly that he never could make it through Volume 1 of Marx's *Das Kapital*, and struggled to comprehend what he did read. He can't pass up this opportunity to stick it to an arrogant organizer sent to Detroit from New York in 1928. And the Croatian in Nelson emerges in a casual generalization that "radicalism was less developed among the Serbs [in the U.S.], who seemed more dominated by priests and traditional leaders."

Withdrawal symptoms.

Down-to-earth and empathetic, Steve Nelson was also a Communist, and all Communists were guilty of some scurvy rationalizations. On the West Coast when Japanese-Americans were interned, he admits with latter-day shame that he believed the move was necessary. He concedes he was wrong in backing the party's wartime more-patriotic-than-thou no-strike pledge. However, though a Smith Act victim himself, he is silent now as the party was then about the wartime Smith Act persecution of Trotskyists.

There are also signs of lingering withdrawal symptoms more than two decades after he left the party. Most astounding is a comment on the Soviet-Nazi pact of 1939, which overnight turned Communists into "Yanks Are Not Coming" pacifists. After making a case for the pact from the Russian point of view, certainly historically arguable, and adding the now obvious point that the American party should have remained strongly anti-Nazi, he says, "It would be wrong, however, to blame the Soviet Union for the decisions of the American party. The blame is ours because we did not make our own analysis."

Steve, Steve. Did the Soviet party really want us to make our own analysis? Did it want the Yugoslav party to make its own analysis on national roads to socialism in 1948? The Hungarian party in '56? The Czech party in '68? Does it want the Italian party to make its own analysis condemning the Soviet role in Po-

Continued on page 23

Steve Nelson participated in the best of the CP, laying the groundwork for CIO organizing (below, a CIO protest in Michigan).



BLACK HISTORY

In a river of resistance



Harding recounts the struggles of little-known black men and women (above, New York City demonstrators).

There Is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America
By Vincent Harding
Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich,
417 pp., \$19.95

By David Roediger

Sterling Brown, the distinguished critic and poet, once observed that it is easy enough for a poet to shout in his verses but harder to win from the reader a desire to shout. Historians, I'd add, seldom succeed as either shouters or provocateurs of shouts. Vincent Harding remains an exception. Harding, an historian and head of the Institute of the Black World, has produced a steady stream of influential articles—sometimes noisy and sometimes brilliantly understated—on the Afro-American past. Now, *There Is a River*.

River, the first in a projected three-volume history of the freedom struggle of black Americans, continues many themes developed earlier by Harding. The author searches the record of protest and poses a vital question: "What were the sources of vision and hope?" He stresses Afro-Christianity, a sense of pan-African community and nearness to the land as central to the building of a positive black tradition of struggle.

Most importantly, he insists that such Afro-American resistance constitutes a tradition, a wide, deep river rather than a series of episodes. From "the shores of Africa" to the Union Army camps of the Civil war, black rebels drew upon that tradition. Harding's many allusions to the use of folk songs in rebellions and escapes betray no

taste for the picturesque. Rather they illustrate how firmly black culture undergirded black protest.

The image of a river, with all its powerful symbolism in Afro-American music and poetry, serves Harding well. It allows him to discuss a dazzling array of strategies and to consider the

merits of each without becoming fixated on differences within the freedom movement. Harding's *River* is a wide one, fed by many currents. He discusses early rebellions bent on winning return to Africa, escapes, arson, rescues of fugitive slaves, abolitionism, emigrationism, suicide, millennial Christianity, "strikes" by slaves,

the Negro conventions and more as manifestations of one impulse toward liberation. The "outliers" living as outlaws in Southern swamps, the guerrillas who fought alongside the Seminoles in Indian wars, the "bad and crazy niggers" who fought back, take their places alongside urban lawyers like John Mercer Langston. Crucially—and here the debt to C.L.R. James is unmistakable—*River* focuses not just on leaders but also on activity of little-known black men and women at the grassroots level.

Nonetheless, Harding does not shun discussion of splits in the freedom movement nor hesitate to make plain where his sympathies lie. His treatment of the differences between emigrationist/nationalists like Martin Delany and what Harding calls the Great Tradition of Black Protest, typified by Frederick Douglass, is quite full and partisan. Harding identifies with the nationalists and makes the telling point that nationalism was not simply a negative thrust against white racism. The black radical of the antebellum years, he writes, "had been drawn to the depths of the river...by the love of his people, rather than coerced into such streams by a slavish, vengeful reaction against whites and their ways." This refusal to see black life as just a refraction of American realities also contributes to Harding's lucidity on the division in the black abolitionist movement, which he sees as having a dynamic quite apart from the white abolitionist movement.

Too simple.

Harding's admiration for the tradition represented by Delany and H. Ford Douglas rests less on the possibility of emigration's success—though he does rightly applaud the Pan-African thrust of Delany's projects—than on the uncompromising refusal of the emigrationists to deceive themselves as to the possibility that white America was about to change peacefully. Delany and Douglas, according to Harding, stood uncompromisingly for reliance on black initiative while Frederick Douglass, too often, hoped for a deliverance

in which whites were instrumental.

This seems to me far oversimplified. The traditions of black self-reliance and self-activity grew up within the Great Tradition of Black Protest, especially the black church, the Negro convention movement and fugitive slave rescue operations. They had little to do with emigrationism, an issue on which black leaders often switched positions. Self-reliant, nationalist rhetoric and bitter anti-Americanism can be found in the works of Douglass. Moreover, the speeches of Henry Highland Garnet, too little considered by Harding, express a nationalist pride more than equal to Delany's, while remaining closer to the Great Tradition of Black Protest. If, as Harding argues, "Without Delany, it is impossible to grasp fully the meaning of...Marcus Garvey," it is equally true that, lacking an appreciation of Garnet (and Douglass), we will not know the nationalism of W.E.B. DuBois and Paul Robeson.

One further criticism deserves attention. Harding portrays a river that rages and quickens, swirls and reaches rip tide, but he does not much contemplate the waters in their seeming stillness, running deep. A sustained treatment of the values, the faith, the folklore and the everyday lives of Afro-Americans would complement the saga of blacks nearer to the barricades. Such a focus would also illuminate the origins of black nationalism, which, I would suggest, lie much closer to plantation life on the Southern branch of the freedom river than most scholars have yet acknowledged.

Early reviews of *River* have pointed out the timeliness of the book's appearance amidst the bleak civil rights prospects of the '80s. The opposite point is at once more chilling and hopeful. This fine book has a timeless significance—Reaganism or Carterism, Fair Deal or New, slavery days and today—the reality of white racism remains. But so too does the river. ■

David Roediger teaches history at Northwestern University.

PUBLISHING

A final solution for imaginary Arabs

They Must Go
By Meir Kahane
Grosset & Dunlap, 282 pp.,
\$14.95

By James Zogby

Let us remove the Arabs from Israel and bring the redemption.
—Meir Kahane, *They Must Go*

Thus Meir Kahane, founder of the Jewish Defense League, concludes his most recent book. *They Must Go* is a frightening and crazed call, in Kahane's words, to "remove the cancer from Israel's midst." The "cancer" is the Arab population of Israel and the Occupied Territories. This plan, notes Grosset and Dunlap's promotional piece on the book, is "the only plan for Israel's survival."

The book claims to be about Israel's Arabs. Kahane's Arabs, however, are like Hitler's Jews and Norman Rockwell's blacks. They do not exist. The "Arabs" to whom we are introduced are "bloodthirsty," "filled with hate

and lust," "crazed," and craving "beautiful Jewish women."

Kahane presents the reader with several fictionalized accounts of "marauding Arabs" slaughtering innocent Jews (much akin to Hollywood's accounts of "savage Indians" attacking innocent settlers). Kahane's history, however, is like his Arabs—a figment of his imagination. For Kahane, only the Jews are attacked. The many Jewish massacres of Arabs are either forgotten or ignored.

In the end, however, Arab violence does not most concern Kahane. His preoccupations are with Arab lust and Arab fertility. The high Arab population growth rate is alternately referred to as a "cancer," "the Arab population peril" and a "ticking time bomb." The "rapidly breeding Arabs" frighten Kahane and threaten his Israel.

There is, Kahane says, "an inordinate percentage of Arab involvement in sexual crimes." He speaks of "Arab sexual pervers-

sion." And "the more the Arabs multiply and reach Jewish areas, the greater will be the number of general crimes, and sexual crimes in particular, committed against the Jews."

If sexual contact is not forced and criminal, it will, he fears, take place because of familiarity. "Nor can one escape," he cautions, "the growth in social intercourse between Jewish women and Arab men that escalates yearly" because of "increasing contact."

So consumed is Kahane by this question of Arab lust and sex that he made it one of the cornerstones of his recent election campaign for the Knesset. In a paid advertisement in Israeli newspapers, Kahane proposed a Knesset bill that included a clause propositioning "a mandatory jail sentence of five years with no possibility of parole. This is for any non-Jew who has sexual relations with a Jewess."

This is but one of the stopgap, short-term solutions proposed by Kahane in *They Must Go*. Others include expropriating Arab land, ending university education for Arabs who do not pledge support for an exclusive Jewish state; terminating all state aid to Arabs in Israel and suspending all citizenship rights.

For his "final solution," however, Kahane borrows a line from one of Israel's most famous hero-terrorists of the '50s, Meir Har-Zion: "I do not say we should put them on trucks or kill them.... We must create a situation in which, for them, it is not worth living here."

They Must Go is not about the Arab-Israeli conflict. It is a *Mein Kampf* written by a Jew. It is shameful, but it is even more shameful that Grosset and Dunlap has seen fit to publish it. Grosset and Dunlap's promotionals are as distasteful as Kahane and his book. The book's cover, for example, screams, "How long can Israel survive its malignant and growing Arab population? How long before they rule over the Jewish Homeland?"

"In this manifesto, Rabbi Meir Kahane sets forth the only plan for Israel's salvation. *THEY MUST GO*."

A Grosset and Dunlap official suggested the possibility of a debate between Meir Kahane and me. My debate, I responded, is not with Kahane. It is with Grosset and Dunlap. They are publishing an incitement to commit violence against Arabs. ■

James Zogby directs the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.



ART CRITICISM

Another way of seeing John Berger

Seeing Berger: A Re-evaluation

By Peter Fuller

Writers and Readers, 175 5th Ave., NY, NY 10010
40 pp., \$1.95

By Pat Aufderheide

John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* has become a kind of Bible of left art criticism. Composed as part of a project aired on the BBC responding to Kenneth Clark's *Civilisation* series, the short book has a simple argument. Art history is not a parade of great artists shining light on our world from the outside, but part of social history. In particular, "A way of seeing the world, which was ultimately determined by new attitudes to property and exchange, found its visual expression in the oil painting and could not have found it in any other visual form." Painting was "a safe into which the visible has been deposited."

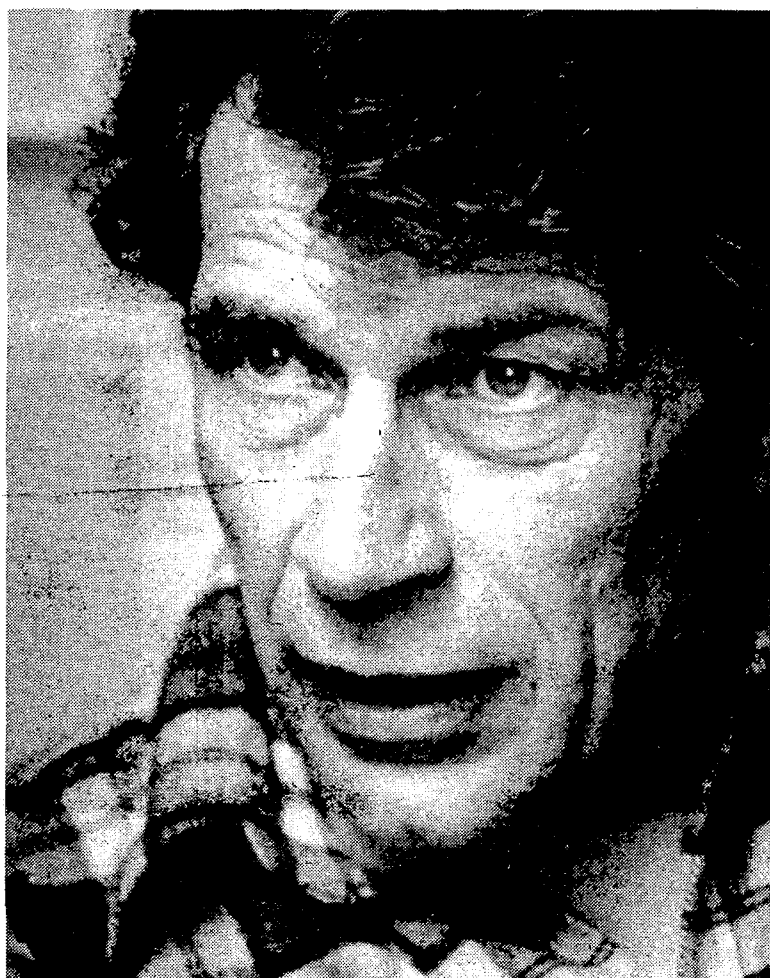
The book outraged traditionalist art critics, and academics heaped scorn on this firebrand analysis. But some leftists also took it to task—for not going far enough. Now available in this country is a succinct evaluation of the book's importance and its weaknesses, written by English art critic Peter Fuller, who claims immediate critical descen-

dence from Berger.

Fuller carefully points out the importance of Berger's contribution, and qualifies his criticism by pointing out that the book was written as a polemic. Nonetheless, he argues, Berger came close to throwing out the baby—the right and ability to analyze the what-ever-it-is that makes art art—with the bathwater.

*His approach
can't explain
the difference
between good
and great
art of an era.*

A way of seeing, reminds Fuller, is not a way of painting. Berger doesn't comment on the way of painting of, say, Franz Hals. So a traditionalist bourgeois art historian can say more about the means by which Hals' paintings are affecting than Berger can, at least from *Ways of Seeing*. Fuller believes there are cultural and biological universals among human beings that transcend a so-



cial moment and on which artists depend. Berger, by reducing art to a social moment, undercuts a part of the world from his analysis.

Further, Berger's social analysis cannot explain—as Berger himself admitted, calling it the "immense theoretical weakness" of the work—the difference be-

tween a great piece of art and a run-of-the-mill product from the same era. There is something outside art's social context and its social content. (This is not, of course, a new observation. In *The Aesthetic Dimension* among other places, Herbert Marcuse cautioned, "However correctly one has analyzed a poem, play or novel in terms of its social content, the questions as to whether the particular work is good, meaningful and true are still unanswered. But the answers to these questions cannot again be given in terms of the specific relations of production that constitute the historical context of the respective work.")

Does Fuller have a solution? In theory, yes. He calls for a materially grounded aesthetic, not only to distinguish between the great and the ordinary but between better and worse among the "normative" works of art of an era.

In his other works Berger is nowhere near so reductionist. A painter himself, Berger realizes the autonomy of art and its liberating promise. Why did he box himself in theoretically? The fact that *Ways of Seeing* was a polemical moment is part of the reason. The other, Fuller argues, is that Berger took very seriously Walter Benjamin's writings on modern culture, in particular the distinction Benjamin drew between an age of unique objects and one in which art was reproduced mechanically. Fuller reminds us that Benjamin's attitude toward a modern world where the aesthetic values and traditions that fed him intellectually were being eroded was two-sided. On the one hand he celebrated the power of traditional art. On the other he conquered despair with extravagant claims for a brave new world in which the very processes that looked decadent might themselves be liberating.

Fuller's corrective essay is valuable for reminding us of the historic moment of *Ways of Seeing*, of its importance and the challenge it left. I, however, want to see what Fuller can offer instead, although this slight essay is probably not the place to find it.

Writers and Readers publishers, which recently opened a branch in New York, has reissued in American editions some long-hard-to-get works by Berger, including his novels, *A Painter of Our Time* (\$3.95), *The Foot of Clive* (\$3.95) and *Corker's Freedom* (\$4.95). It has reissued as well his 1960 collection of essays and art criticism, *Permanent Red* (\$4.95). The publishing house also publishes Peter Fuller and has issued his *Psychoanalysis and Art* (\$6.95).

Movies

Continued from page 24

ular *Four Seasons*. But *First Monday in October* trivialized its subjects on the Supreme Court's political hot seats, and *Absence of Malice* played maliciously with the concept of journalistic responsibility, while *Whose Life Is It Anyway?* drained the life from its character before the screenplay was finished.

Hollywood features seem to be sliding most rapidly backward in creating roles and vehicles for those who, only yesterday, looked like hopefuls for new images (and also like new markets among audiences)—blacks and women. *Bustin' Loose* and *Stir Crazy* were some of the only films where one could find a black in a leading role, and they both starred Richard Pryor, one of the most brilliant actors (and writers) of our time in any medium. The NAACP, in fact, protested to the Motion Picture Association of America that only 12 black actors were featured in the 200 releases last year.

Women's roles seem to be shrinking, too. One can only cringe, thinking of *Rich and Famous*, offering an insufferable snob and a blowsy suburbanite sniping at each other as models for women's friendship;

and of the hyper-stylized vamping of *Body Heat* (echoed bizarrely in that peculiar attempt at a comedy of alienation, *Neighbors*). That the heroine of *Continental Divide* keeps her career ought to be heartening, I suppose, but living with eagles in the Rockies is a rather specialized job.

Offbeat variety.

Slightly off the beaten track you could find both character and variety, especially when films long touted finally came to town. *From Mao to Mozart*, the documentary chronicling violinist Isaac Stern's trip to China, shows delightfully the sea change that cultural forms undergo when they travel to other societies. (It also shows what an Oscar—last year's—will do for distribution.) The American independent film *Heartland*, made in 1979, finally made it to national release and won hearts with its accurate and unpretentiously touching drama about a family's survival on a Wyoming ranch.

It was an excellent year for foreign films, some of which even got into theaters. Solidarity pushed into the public eye not only *Man of Iron* but also *Contract*, the latest film by Poland's other leading filmmaker, Krzysztof Zanussi. Francesco Rosi's probing look at Italy's political crisis through the eyes of three brothers who go home for a

weekend, *Three Brothers*, even got recognized with an Academy nomination. Thanks to film festivals and societies, there were flashes of light from all over the world—the Hindi film *The Churning*, a tightly-told tale about political organizing in a small village; Margarethe von Trotta's latest film *The German Sisters (The Leaden Years)*, an exploration of personal and political conflicts during the Baader-Meinhof crisis; and the riotous epic Japanese film *Eijaneika*, recapturing the 19th century shock of meeting the West (seen from the vantage point of street people) were only three of many.

We also got our *One from the Heart*—not Francis Coppola's patronizing, gaudy film, but Dusan Makavejev's *Montenegro*. This may be the Yugoslavian filmmaker's breakthrough film to audiences baffled or disgusted by his *WR: Mysteries of the Organism* or *Sweet Movie*. Makavejev is an unreconstructed Reichian. He has said, "Politics is for those whose orgasm is incomplete," and his movies pursue his vision with zest and without subtlety. Here he's as bold as ever, but the plot is less freewheeling than before, while his images of the psychological costs of capitalism are still uncannily sharp.

If Coppola doesn't seem to be making watchable movies lately, he has great taste in other peo-

ple's films. American Zoetrope's successes recently have been in facilitating and distributing films that suit Coppola's highly theatrical taste. The studio gave the Abel Gance silent film *Napoleon* (reassembled by Kevin Brownlow with British National Film Archives help) the hoopla that the flashy film deserves, and just in time for Gance to see success before he died. *Napoleon's* spectacle gives, along with a hefty dose of great-man theory of history, a sense of how profoundly film's potential was narrowed once sound was added. Zoetrope also distributed *The Perfumed Nightmare*, a low-low budget film by a Filipino who charts his journey toward first-world progress, and his disillusionment once he arrives. It is a good-humored crash course in the meaning and cost, for others, of the way we live.

These films, like so many others, rarely come into the Academy's purview. Well, Academy-watching eventually can make you crazy—it's too much ado about nothing but affect. It does, however, set off fantasies. I would like the Oscars to end with a wedding. *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, a wallpaper-deep depiction of a woman and an era, could marry the hollowly-rattling *Excalibur*, a tortured celebration of manliness. Maybe they could borrow the wedding scene from *Four Friends*.

»SPORTSCENE«

JOURNALISM

Is 'objective but not neutral' good enough?



By Rick Ridder

About a decade ago, when the Boston Bruins hockey team was riding a crest of popularity in the Boston TV market, the rights to televise their games came up for negotiation. WDBK-TV, the Storer Broadcasting Co. outlet in Boston, bid for those rights but its bid was too low. So Storer bought the team.

In the past year two major league clubs have been purchased by communications corporations. The Tribune Company, owner of the *Chicago Tribune*, WGN-AM-TV, WGN Cable and other communications facilities, bought the Chicago Cubs baseball team for \$20.5 million. And Taft Broadcasting, owner of WTAF-TV (Philadelphia), WDCA-TV (Washington, D.C.), a string of amusement parks and a partner with the cable company TCI in program distribution for cable, acquired a major portion of the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team.

The key to each deal was sports broadcast rights. The Cubs will continue to be seen across the country on WGN-TV, a "super station" carried by satellite to cable companies nationwide. The Tribune Company hopes to turn the lowly Cubs into an exciting, winning team that will send cable clearances for WGN—the price of the station's advertising time—out of the ballpark. Taft will take over the Phillies' TV broadcasts through their WTAF affiliate as of 1984, when the current broadcast contract with WPHL expires.

Broadcast ownership of professional sports teams is not new. Indeed one such company has the dubious distinction of being the only recent owner to lose money on a major league baseball team. CBS bought the New York Yankees, then sold them in 1973 for less than the original purchase price.

Pay to play.

But sports are growing ever more important as a broadcast entertainment and programming source. This, coupled with inflation in the purchase price of professional sports teams, will probably accelerate the ownership of sports teams by communications corporations. The individual, with exceptions such as George Steinbrenner, is out of the bidding. Only large corporations will be able to play in major league markets.

Can objective coverage of a team's performance be expected from a sportscaster, play-by-play announcer, reporter or color man when his or her employer also owns the team? Or, as one observer put it, "How can you say over the air to potential cus-

tomers that the centerfielder your boss just shelled out \$1.5 million for is a bum?"

It is difficult, if not impossible, to prove such abuse of objectivity. Sportscasters and team announcers are notorious "homers," if not outright shills, for their teams. In part this is a result of the team contractually retaining the "last right" in the naming of play-by-play announcers, regardless of whether the team and the communications company have shared ownership. Still, temptation increases in a cross-ownership situation.

There have been allegations in the past—never proved—that cross-ownership situations have resulted in overly extensive unfair coverage.

Allegations such as these and others were made in the FCC's hearings related to Midwest

Radio-Television's 1967 renewal of WCCO-TV-AM in Minneapolis by another station, KSTP-AM. One of Midwest Radio-Television's parent companies owned a piece of the Minnesota Vikings football team, as well as the two daily newspapers in twin-city St. Paul. The other partner in Midwest owned the major newspapers in Minneapolis. KSTP charged the Twin City newspapers and WCCO inadequately covered other sports teams, such as the ABA Pipers, and gave unduly broad coverage to the Vikings. The allegations were never substantiated, and the licenses were renewed, although three commissioners voted for further hearings.

Andy McKenna, chairman of the board of the Cubs, said there was a strong movement to assure objectivity. McKenna cited the

Some sports teams are now owned by communications conglomerates.



IN THESE TIMES MARCH 24-30, 1982 21 hiring of the controversial Harry Carey with his frequent on-air criticisms of ballplayer performance, as evidence of their commitment to impartiality.

Taft Broadcasting's Bill Bauman, director of investor relations, remarked that the conflict of interest question "never entered our thoughts" particularly because WTAF (a UHF station) currently does not program news. Furthermore, the consideration of the issue "was premature," Bauman said.

Paychecks and peers.

Ted Turner, one of the major cross-owners of sports teams and video outlets, said, "We haven't found a problem down here" with conflict of interest. Turner, who owns the Atlanta Braves baseball team and the Atlanta Hawks basketball team, as well as WTBS, a "super station" that sends his teams' games by satellite to cable systems across the nation, said, "We just let our sportscasters tell them what's going on." But when asked if any sportscaster gives a consistently negative view of what is happening, Turner responded, "Well, they know where their paycheck is coming from."

Because of recent developments in cable TV, a team can now own the programming channel. Several other basketball, hockey, college and major league teams are investigating cable. A team such as the Boston Red Sox, with only a 35,000-seat capacity at Fenway Park, could receive \$3 a game from someone sitting at home.

The Seattle Supersonics of the NBA have pioneered this arrangement by leasing a channel on 10 local cable systems this season and charging \$120 for 73 home and away game cablecasts. The Supersonics have made this pay TV service a success with more than 12,000 subscribers in its first year. The FCC urges broadcast stations to announce that the announcer is paid at least in part by the team that he is covering.

These rules do not apply to cable. However, the Supersonics provide this information prior to their cablecasts. "We feel that disclosure is the important thing. ... We just try to have our announcers be objective, but not neutral," says Lloyd Conney, director of broadcasting for the Supersonics.

Rick Ridder worked last year for the National Citizens Committee on Broadcasting (NCCB). A version of this article first appeared in NCCB's Access newsletter.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Despite the numbers, a shaky future for women's athletics

By Lee Ballinger

The annual sports participation survey by the National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations shows that in 1980-81 male participation fell by 14,705 while female participation rose by 103,525. On balance a good year? These numbers really reflect the last big push by a women's sports movement based on an expanding economy (that no longer exists). The gains by girls have been accomplished by getting maximum use out of already existing facilities originally constructed for boys. That's why the decline for the boys is a

much more significant figure. It represents the erosion of the athletic bedrock that is indispensable to the athletic programs of both sexes.

The real future of women's sports is more accurately reflected in the sudden death of the AAUW and the placing of the last bandillera in the neck of the dying bull known as the Equal Rights Amendment (two ears and a tail to Jesse Helms). The NCAA spent \$50,000 to investigate Wichita State and the federal government has increased grants for on-campus military research 70 percent at the same time that University of Missouri Chancellor Barbara Uehling has been forced to cut \$388,000 from the 1981-82

athletic budget. That money had been used primarily to fund Title IX programs for women.

When U.S. District Judge Henry Bramwell slapped a ten-year sentence on convicted Boston College point-shaver Rick Kuhn, ESPN basketball analyst Dick Vitale advocated that copies of the many stories hailing the verdict be placed in every locker room in America. At last, said Dick and others, a viable deterrent to point-shaving. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Rick Kuhn did not slip into town in the dead of night to bludgeon a fair virgin known as college basketball. He grew up,

as we all did, under a constant barrage of gambling information. Point spreads are as much a part of the daily news as the weather or Dear Abby. Each day a huge subterranean postal system efficiently delivers millions of betting slips, tip sheets and pool cards. The countless dollars that are bet on sports go through the sticky fingers of an organized crime network that uses the profits to fund its other corporate divisions—drugs, prostitution and labor racketeering. They do not fix games. They try to adjust the point spread so that an equal amount of money is bet on each team. They take their 10 percent commission and never have a losing season.

While the Reagan administration talks constantly about union corruption, they do nothing about the people who fund it, in large part with money derived from sports gambling. Many people seem to have forgotten the names of the people they know who do control gambling. Kuhn was a borderline scholar-

ship player who wanted a little extra spending money. His sentence will not deter anyone for very long. College and professional basketball depend to a large extent on the fact that millions of kids must rely on their jump shot for their only chance to succeed in life. Those few lucky ones who do play in college are fair game for those who finance point-shaving schemes. If we allow the economy to continue its descent into the minor leagues, more and more athletes will get caught in the web.

The alternative is to legalize and heavily tax all sports gambling. This would not only undermine organized crime but also provide the money to help revitalize the society that produced Rick Kuhn, to insure that future athletes who are approached by fixers will have a choice beyond "yes" or "no."

Lee Ballinger is an Ohio steelworker from whose sports newsletter, In Your Face! (Box 1041, Warren, OH 44481) this material is excerpted.

Labor

Continued from page 6

trapped in another Vietnam," Sheinkman said. "If we support these regimes, it's going to put us on the outs. I'm concerned about communist penetration, but you've got to support the opposition forces that can prevent it."

Sheinkman also believes that forces of change are at work within the communist parties, especially Italy. That goes against the old-line AFL-CIO thinking, epitomized by European representative Irving Brown, who supported Giscard d'Estaing and later Jacques Chirac against Francois Mitterrand, telling American unionists that there was only the Gaullist machine and the communist machine in France—an analysis that has certainly proven foolish.

But the dominant tendency in the AFL-CIO is to reason from the nature of Soviet trade unions to the inevitable character of unionism if communists in the West had control in a government. Ergo, not only is it *verboten* to communicate with eastern bloc unions, it is impermissible to have dealings with communist-influenced unions elsewhere.

Returning to the fold.

That will be one of many issues that will spark debate as the AFL-CIO returns this year to the ICFTU, the major non-communist world union federation that the AFL-CIO left in 1969 primarily because of ICFTU approval of dialogue with

communists and its admission of the UAW after it had left the AFL-CIO. The AFL-CIO could be influenced by the varied and more leftist politics of the ICFTU. In a few instances, it might be pressured to drop affiliation with ultraconservative union movements in other countries. (For example, after the ICFTU expelled the Uruguayan federation for support of its undemocratic regime, the AFL-CIO kept up ties.)

Also, the U.S. unions' militarism will be tested. Last November the ICFTU denounced the arms race as "a shameful waste" that "diverts resources critical to combat poverty, hunger and disease" and called for abandonment of the Soviet SS20 missiles and the U.S. Cruise and Pershing II missiles as well as plans for the neutron bomb. The ICFTU favored talks on general disarmament and creation of nuclear free zones.

But the influence may go the other way. A *New Statesman* report on talks on reaffiliation revealed that Kirkland and Brown were pressing their fight to keep communist-led unions, such as the Spanish Comisiones Obreras, out of the European Trade Union Confederation. Kirkland apparently wants to turn the ICFTU into a unified organ for attacks on Eastern European governments' control of their unions and will fight against the nuclear free zone in Europe.

"I certainly hope the presence of the AFL-CIO would not lead to ICFTU policies being less worthy than in the past," said John Harker, director of international affairs for the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). "If the AFL-CIO tried to make policies less effective and less progressive, several of us would fight

against it." The CLC shares the AFL-CIO commitment to free trade unions, but in El Salvador, for example, maintains contact with both sides and presses for a negotiated political settlement.

Knee-jerk or smooth?

Benjamin Martin, a former union organizer and State Department labor official, thinks that Kirkland will bring a "more sophisticated veneer" to foreign policy than Meany had, but he remains an "ideological clone" of his mentor. "The Kirkland people find themselves in a terribly difficult situation," he said. "Their foreign policy coincides to a very large extent with Reagan's. It's a hard-line, knee-jerk anti-communism basically, but there's a great deal of ambivalence because Reagan doesn't pay any attention to the labor movement."

Bush and Haig, however, have recently been recruiting labor for service on behalf of the administration's foreign policy. For example, after Haig's appearance before the February AFL-CIO executive council, Steelworkers president Lloyd McBride said that with regard to El Salvador "there was more of a commonality on that than on other issues. But the majority of the board was of the opinion we should be dealing with Poland and the Soviet Union in a more forceful way."

Michael Boggs, assistant director of the international affairs department, denies Martin's characterization: "It's wrong. Going back to the ICFTU, discussing the CGIL [the communist-led union federation in Italy] versus other organizations in the European Trade Union Confederation, and dealing with affiliates who bridge with Communists—there's a new world. It's not knee-jerk."

It is, however, still fundamentally anti-communist in its overall outlines. Yet there are tensions within the small, tight-knit world of union international affairs people. But at the moment, the hard-liners, many of them again leftovers from the Meany/Jay Lovestone era or younger people associated with the Social Democrats/USA, still have the upper hand. (Social Democrats, including AFL-CIO staff, have been instrumental in proliferating paper organizations that defend the El Salvador land reform program. Among them are the Institute for Religion and Democracy, which attacks liberal policies, the Citizens Committee for Freedom in the Americas; and the Committee for Land Reform in El Salvador. Their work is used by AIFLD to defend its program.) Even some of the more liberal unions presidents are reluctant to force divisions on foreign policy: in many cases they need help from the AFL-CIO or their colleagues.

Despite the insulation of foreign policy-makers, rank and file pressure could make a difference. The hard-hatted hawk image not withstanding, public opinion polls have shown blue-collar workers

more opposed to the Korean and Vietnam wars and willing to negotiate solutions than the upper middle class. Although workers support a "strong defense," there is also a widespread feeling that the military takes too much. Especially after Vietnam, blue-collar doubts about military adventurism should also run high.

Individual unions have taken independent stands in favor of military cutbacks, disarmament and prevention of nuclear war, in addition to the expected left unions—the Machinists, the UE (electrical workers) and the West Coast Longshoremen. Two public employee unions (AFSCME and AFGE), two rival electrical unions (IUE and UE) and the NEA are part of a budget coalition that calls for military spending to be transferred to people's needs. The UAW, the Steelworkers and the United Food and Commercial Workers are supporting Ground Zero, an effort to educate people on the dangers of nuclear war. And dozens of local unions—including many affiliates of the hawkish Teachers union—have joined in the nuclear freeze initiatives in California and elsewhere.

"I think Reagan has done a lot to solidify labor opposition," said David Dyson, an ACTWU staff member and secretary of the new El Salvador committee. "That opposition has spilled over to issues other than the bread and butter ones. It's harder to say we're against you 100 percent on domestic economic policy and with you 100 percent on foreign policy."

But it poses no problem for many in labor's leadership. Their outlook has deep roots—Gompers' battles with the socialists, the factional fights for control of the unions against the communists, a history of manipulation and, in Eastern Europe, suppression of democratic unionism by communists, a weak democratic socialist tradition in the U.S., the virulent anti-communism of American culture, the imperial mentality of Americans that bloomed into a hothouse monstrosity in the years after World War II and the unions' comfortable accommodation to corporate capitalism.

It is ironic that many of the unions that are most vociferous in their denunciations of the lack of democracy in communist countries are the most willing to support undemocratic, anti-communist unions in capitalist countries. Also, they are often themselves undemocratic, corrupt and unresponsive to their members—many of whom look at their officials much as Solidarity members looked at the official Polish unions.

Any flexibility, any openness, however small, should be welcomed, for the hard-line anti-communist policies of the AFL-CIO have clearly, if somewhat paradoxically, undermined their worthy overt rationale—the support of democratic trade unionism throughout the world.

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NEW YORK, NY

March 26

Radical History Forum. Erik Barnouw will discuss Film as a Medium for the Historian and screen "Fable Safe," a cartoon film on the arms race he made with Robert Osborn. John Jay College, 445 West 59th (between 9th and 10th) 7:30 p.m. Admission \$2.50.

April 17

"Protest and Survive: Poland, El Salvador and Disarmament." An all-day conference featuring Daniel Singer, author of "The Road to Gdansk," Dan Smith, Chairperson of the Committee for European Nuclear Disarmament, and a speaker from the Movement Against U.S. Intervention in El Salvador. Workshops to be announced. Riverside Church, 120th and Riverside Drive. \$4.00. For advance tickets or to contribute, write Solidarity Support Campaign, 301 W. 105th St., NYC 10025. For information call (212) 222-9703.

WASHINGTON, D C

March 27

Protesters against intervention in El Salvador

who wish to link support for Polish Solidarity with disarmament and opposition to U.S. role in Latin America are invited to meet anti-war activists and trade unionists from around the country. Join Barbara Garson, Robert Armstrong, Gail Baneker, Joanne Landy, Sam Meyers and others for refreshments and talk on the 27th in room 206, Executive House Hotel, 1515 Rhode Island Ave., NW (one block from where the march ends) from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. For additional information, contact Solidarity Support Campaign, 301 W. 105th St., NY, NY 10025, (212) 222-9703.

COLLEGE PARK, M D

April 5

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CAMBRIDGE, MA

April 17-18

A conference on Employee Participation in Ownership and Management will be held at the Kennedy School, Harvard University. Fees—\$50 (NCEO, AWD and ICA members), \$65 (others). Send to: NCEO, 4836 S. 28th St., Arlington, VA 22206.

Nelson

Continued from page 18

land? Does it want Castro to make his own analysis of Soviet actions? Carillo in Spain? For that matter, did it want the U.S. party to make its own analysis between Foster and Browder in '45?

Nelson's book will not be hailed by Gus Hall's current CPUSA. Not a book in which the author says that the attack on Czecho-

slovakia convinced him that "Stalinism was more than the mentality of one maniac; it was a product of an essentially undemocratic system."

Nelson undertook to tell the story of an American Communist in action, and this he does surpassingly well. In emerging as a three-dimensional personality he helps illumine the officially-obscured personhood of those who put all their talents and energy to work for a better society.

Lester Rodney is the one-time sports editor of the Daily Worker.

SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander

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1 Union Square West, NY, NY 10003 or Mitchell Silver, Program Director at (617)628-3365.

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To Have and Have Not

By
Pat Aufderheide

IT'S EASY—MAYBE TOO EASY—TO get cynical about the Academy Awards, that overwrought parody of our national obsession with ranking. After all, they only incidentally register film quality in any critical sense. They are prizes given by workers in an industry to each other, within a social club of lifetime members. They can honor good behavior or even past achievements within the tiny world of making American mainstream features.

Do *Reds*' 12 Oscar nominations, for instance, mean that Hollywood has come to its political senses? Not necessarily. The nominations do honor an impressive achievement, a production ambitious technically and artistically, as well as commercial in the best Hollywood sense. It helped that the movie survived its own self-sabotaging marketing, offering entertainment that also provoked thought to mass audiences. It also successfully weathered cavils from both left and right: both groups hinted that there was something impure in mixing the personal and the social and even something sacrilegious in showing how romantic the American passion with social change has been.

But they also honor Warren Beatty, a man whose insouciance has in the past lost him good will in Hollywood, and, some say, Oscars as well. Jack Nicholson recently commented in *Rolling Stone*, "The Academy has always been a little hesitant to give the Pro his due. They hold back because he's so pretty and cute." He might have said they hold back because he does, making famous a personality that powerfully mixes seduction with standoffishness.

Is *On Golden Pond*'s sweep of the nominations a case of pandering to the



Man of Iron



On Golden Pond

box office, where the film was a surprise smash hit? No, it's a triumph of sentiment, the stuff on which the apocryphal Academy member—the middle-aged guy "who lives in the valley," works on the technical side and has middlebrow taste—lives. Both subject matter and cast make it a sentimental fave. Consider—aging Katherine Hepburn, as close as you get to royalty in a populist environment like the film industry; Henry Fonda, part of Hollywood's family history, now sickly; and Jane, back in the fold, both at home and at work.

But then what about Jimmy Cagney, whose *Ragtime* role was ignored in the Awards in spite of the sentiment attached to his return to the movies? He fell victim to Oscars politicking. An Oscar can boost profits by millions of dollars, so every distributor runs a vote-getting campaign. Paramount apparently bet that Academy members were unlikely to vote for a new face, a black man and a revolutionary at that (Howard Rollins Jr., playing Coalhouse Walker) as best actor. So they hyped his excellent performance for best supporting actor, a category for which there are no guidelines. It worked, but it also left Cagney out in the cold.

Every year oddities and gaps in the Oscars nominations can be explained by quirky rules. Consider the widely-praised Brazilian film *Pixote*, which the Academy disqualified because it had opened 12 days earlier than admissible in Brazil. Brazilian distributors, who had placed their bets—and ads—on *Pixote*, eagerly reminded Academy members that they could nominate it for other awards. But the community is small, and there is a tendency not to waste votes in major categories on people you don't work with, so *Pixote* got nothing.

Meanwhile, the day before Poland's declaration of war the Academy had bent its rules to accept Andrzej Wajda's *Man of Iron* as a last-minute substitute for another Polish film. Since then the military government has tried to withdraw it, but the Academy now stands on procedure and the film may—once again, on sentimental grounds—win. Since, however, only those who have seen all entries at sign-in screenings can vote on foreign nominees and this typically brings down the number of voters to a few hundred at best (the Academy membership is 3,813), anything can happen.

Documentaries are also affected by special rules. A committee chooses the nominees and final voters must have seen them all. The choices tend to reflect content more than sentiment and to have a socially critical edge—largely because there is no money to be made in documentaries and the projects available tend to be made for the message, not the bottom line. This year is no exception, with features *El Salvador: Another Vietnam*, *Eight Minutes to Midnight: A Portrait of Helen Caldicott* and *Genocide*, a film about the Holocaust, and the short film *Americas in Transition* (a response to the right-wing *Attack on the Americas*, on

Central American revolutions and American foreign policy) all nominated.

1981 was a more interesting year at the movies, among theatrical releases alone (to not speak of independents and the burgeoning crop of nontheatrical documentaries), than the handful of major nominees might suggest. The most interesting work—as even the Oscar nominations reflected, with *Reds*—used social themes in relation to images of romance and escape. It may be a time, like the mid-'30s to early '40s, when it's hard to do something interesting in film without bringing up a social issue.

One of the year's most intriguing projects—*Zoot Suit*, made by Luis Valdez (founder of El Teatro Campesino) from the stage play—was also one of the least visible. Universal's "experimental" distribution made it hard to find outside selected Hispanic centers, and nearly guaranteed that the crossover experiment would fail. But it is an authentic crossover film, one rooted in the Chicano *pachuco* culture that the musical both celebrates and criticizes but accessible to all American audiences. It uses all the tinseltown glitter that its tiny budget allowed to show how important such flashiness can be as a defense against poverty and prejudice.

Pennies from Heaven, a big-budget musical made by some of the most mainstream film and stage producers, seemed to signal a loss of confidence at the core of dreamland. The musical *noir* (unhelpfully and unsuccessfully pitched to the young as a Steve Martin movie) employs Brechtian breaks less to provoke thought than to jar us with filmmakers' discovery of fraud in the mass-produced American dream. "There must be somewhere where all those songs are real," says the schmuck of a central character. And the film's fantasies are marvels, glimpses of a fey heaven—the children at their little white Busby Berkeleyish desk-pianos will become a classic. But the scenes end, inexorably and badly. They are part and parcel of an ugly wider reality. It is astonishing that a bigtime musical this socially ambitious has been made; much less surprising is its tone of hurt naivete, or the fact that some of it just doesn't work. The dissident tone is shocking, especially in the blockbuster era.

Which goes on apace. *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *Superman II* did some of the season's hottest business, and more than a hundred sequels and remakes are planned, including *Star Trek II*, *Grease 2*, *Airplane 2*, *The Sting II*, *Rocky III* and *Halloween III*. Marking the brightest spot on the financial landscape at the moment are horror films, catering to the favored 12-to-27 age bracket and booming, despite critical reputations so low that no one in Hollywood will now admit either to producing or making "a horror film" (people says "suspense drama" when it's their project).

Last year, true, films aimed at adult audiences were made, including the pop-

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